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ABSTRACT

Open University course units are presented on the philosophy of equality and inequality (Unit 3) and on personal inequality as an ideological concept (Unit 4). The substance of Unit 3 consists of extracts from the writings of eight philosophers. The role of the philosopher in forming legitimatizing ideologies is also illustrated. The eight philosophers are: H. Ireton, J.-J. Rousseau, A. de Tocqueville, J. S. Mill, K. Marx, J. F. Stephen, F. Nietzsche, and R. H. Tawney. The aims of Unit 4 are to examine: (1) the concept of personal inequality and its value in interpreting social patterns of inequality, and (2) the concept of innate or natural endowment. The first major section traces the origins of the concept of innate intelligence by examining Darwin's theory of evolution, evaluates its implication for views on the nature of society, and traces the Eugenics movement from its origins in the work of Galton. The scientific and political reactions to doctrinaire forms of biological determinism, the relationship between scientific and ideological thought, and reasons for the continued use of a concept of inherited intelligence are discussed. The development of the intelligence testing movement and further implications are also considered. Questions are presented at the beginning of each unit, and outline answers are given at the end of the unit. References and bibliographic citations are also included. (SW)

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THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

Social Science : A Third Level Course
Patterns of Inequality

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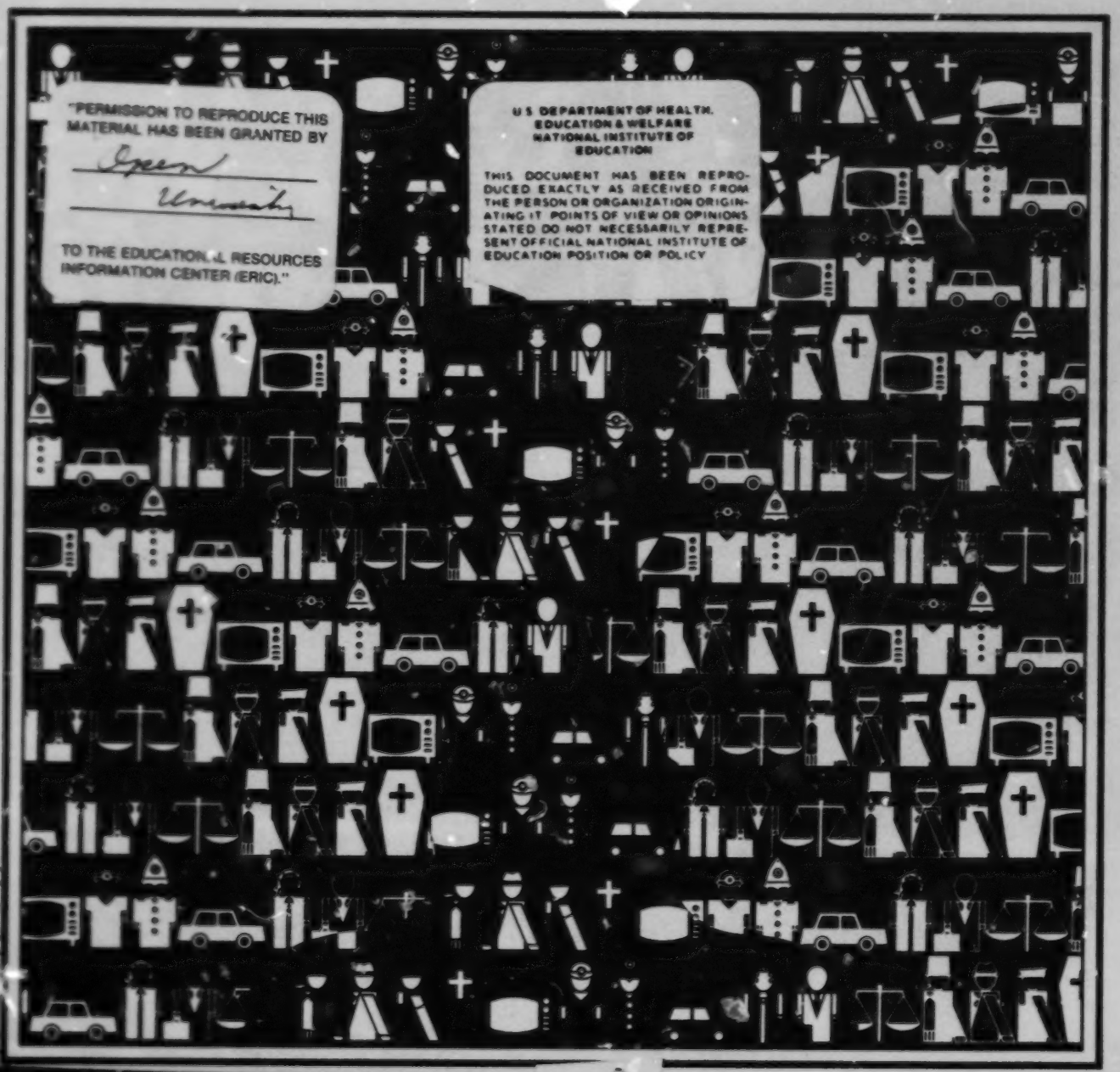
WHAT IS INEQUALITY & WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The Philosophy of Equality & Inequality

Personal Inequality as an Ideological Concept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THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

PATTERNS OF INEQUALITY

UNIT 3
The Philosophy of Equality & Inequality

Prepared for the Course Team by Maurice Hookham, Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Leicester

UNIT 4
Personal Inequality as an Ideological Concept

Prepared by Clive Holloway for the Course Team

3

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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In this unit an attempt is made to examine in greater depth than was possible in Units 1–2 the relation between ideology and philosophy with reference to inequality. The connections between ideology and social science have been touched on in Units 1–2 and it is possible now to look in greater detail at examples of the part played by ideology in social theories about inequality advanced in the past by philosophers. The substance of the unit consists of extracts from their writings about inequality. The terms and concepts used in the previous two units such as ideology, system of beliefs, theory, doctrine, order of ideas and philosophy have no universally accepted meanings. We have already seen the sense with which Tawney introduces ideology into his first chapter and later shows the sense of falseness of view associated with ideology. We have met the distinguishable ideologies associated with liberal and socialist thought. We have seen also how an ideology both reflects a value judgement held (possibly because of a material interest) and also contains a persuasive element that makes it more widely acceptable than merely by those who share the assumptions on which it is based. We have seen how the values tend to be downwards in their flow. It is the writings of the philosophers that both help to give an ideology its persuasiveness and its direction of flow. The distinction that has been drawn between ideology and utopia can be seen illustrated in the extracts. The role of the philosopher in forming legitimating ideologies noted in Units 1–2 is also illustrated and the extracts form a store of writing from which you can draw examples of those ideas that interest you. At an early stage in Units 1–2 a dictionary definition of equality was given revealing a variety of meanings which it has now, and has had in the past. You can distinguish from these meanings two groups that differ in kind – the one descriptive and the other evaluative. The former attributes quantities to the things being compared that can be said to be identical in quantity, 'neither less nor greater'. This may mean an exact identity revealed by accurate measurement or the absence of measurable difference that would permit one to classify the things as less or greater than others. The second group contains things of like degree of a quality or attribute, or on the same level in dignity, power or excellence, enjoying the same rights or privileges. It is in the second group that ideas of equity, fairness, impartiality and 'even-handed dealing' come in as a means for establishing equality.

The writers we are going to examine all more or less accepted the existence of natural inequalities in men (exemplified for many of them by the physical inequalities of men and women) which were actually or in principle quantifiable differences. There was a law of nature in operation and it was therefore sensible to recognize this in the quality sense of dignity, power, excellence and privilege. So long as qualitative inequality was based on quantitative inequality it was fair or just. The experience of the new world of America that began to trickle back to the old world of Europe in the eighteenth century accelerated the challenge, that had begun to be made in the Reformation, to the equation of quantitative and qualitative inequalities. The idea of equality of opportunity gained currency at the time of the French Revolution as a right that was just, fair, democratic or human, to which all men were equally entitled through their quality as men. This was a qualitative equality. It was recognized that its exercise in practice gave rise to quantitative inequalities. The career open to the talents (as against being restricted to those who were privileged by rank or status) meant that all started from scratch in a race which would inevitably be won by some and lost by others. It was eminently fair that all started equally from scratch but it was equally fair that some ended better off in some respect than others.

The writers we shall examine were never able to escape from the ideological assumptions of their own age or background about what was fair, just or democratic. There were difficulties in balancing what was fair for the individual and what was fair for society as a whole. Some balance had to be struck involving not too much equality or

inequality in whatever sense it was being used. A distinction originated (as we shall see) in Greek thought between treating people exactly equally (numerical equality or equality of opportunity) and distribution according to some standard of worth (proportionate equality or the principle of merit). These two distinguishable ideas of equality (or inequality) have been present in all philosophical writing more or less since the eighteenth century. The particular balance between them stated in terms of a theory about how society actually operates, or as a recommendation as to how it should operate, depends on the value judgements on which the theory or recommendation rests. These value judgements inevitably involve ideas like fairness, justice, utility, or, increasingly in the nineteenth century, freedom.

The concept of the generation of inequalities as a social process came into being late in the nineteenth century. It has been discussed in Units 1–2 and plays an important part in the extracts from Rousseau and Marx that follow. It is elaborated and commented on in the article by Hirst in the Course Reader which is set reading for this unit.

Modern philosophers, on the other hand, have tended to play down the element of value judgement in their writings by confining themselves to a task they liken to that of a domestic who tidies the house, clearing up other people's arguments to establish an order from disorder, to find their way better in future. It is a continuous process which can never be completed but one in which the practitioner becomes more skilled.

The objective is therefore the development of a skill rather than the acquisition of a body of knowledge. The tidying up that began in Units 1–2 is continued in the comments on the extracts as is the exposure of the variety of concepts of inequality and equality employed by philosophers and the elements of ideology connected with them.

We start with a passage from a modern philosopher in a discussion about the relationship of the social sciences to ideology and philosophy. The terms and concepts are used systematically in one form or another and in various connections. A new term is introduced in the passage that may present difficulties. A *metaphysical* proposition is defined as one that is not capable of being tested, claiming to be true by definition of its own terms. It rests on some first principle or assumption that is claimed to be self-evident and therefore not needing any justification. It is suggested in the passage that the main value of metaphysical propositions is that they can be used as a source of hypotheses from which theories can be built and tested. They are rooted in ideology and some elements of that ideology are carried over into theories and generalizations from which it is difficult to eliminate them. Before reading the passage, read the following questions and attempt your own answers to them. Outline answers are given at the end of this Unit.

Question 1 What distinctions are there between ideological statements or propositions and scientific ones? Give some examples.

Question 2 Does ideology necessarily enter into both the questions we try to answer and the answers we try to give in the social sciences?

Question 3 Does ideology necessarily enter into both how we think about the world and how we act in our social life?

Now read the passage and after you have read it compare your answers to these questions with those suggested in the passage. Then try to formulate any disagreements you may have with the argument in the passage.

> What then are the criteria of an ideological proposition, as opposed to a scientific one? First, that if an ideological proposition is treated in a logical manner, it either dissolves into a completely meaningless noise or turns out to be a circular argument. Take the proposition: All men are equal. In a

logical view what does it mean? The word 'equal' applies to quantities. What – are all men the same weight? Or do they all get the same marks in intelligence tests? Or – to stretch the meaning of quantity a little – do I find them all equally agreeable? 'Equal' without saying in what respect is just a noise. In this case, the equality is just in respect of equality. Every man is equally equal.

The hallmark of a metaphysical proposition is that it is not capable of being tested. We cannot say in what respect the world would be different if it were not true. The world would be just the same except that we would be making different noises about it. It can never be proved wrong, for it will roll out of every argument on its own circularity; it claims to be true by definition of its own terms. It purports to say something about real life, but we can learn nothing from it. Adopting Professor Popper's criterion for propositions that belong to the empirical sciences, that they are capable of being falsified by evidence, it is not a scientific proposition.

Yet metaphysical statements are not without content. They express a point of view and formulate feelings which are a guide to conduct. The slogan 'All men are equal' expresses a protest against privilege by birth. In an egalitarian society no one would ever have thought of saying any such thing. It expresses a moral standard for private life – that it is wrong to be snobbish about class or colour; and a programme for political life – to create a society where all have the same rights; to refuse to accept a state in which some are more equal than others.

Metaphysical propositions also provide a quarry from which hypotheses can be drawn. They do not belong to the realm of science and yet they are necessary to it. Without them we would not know what it is that we want to know. Perhaps the position is different in the respectable sciences, but, so far as the investigations of psychological and social problems is concerned, metaphysics has played an important, perhaps an indispensable, role.

Take our example – the slogan 'All men are equal' provides a programme for research. Let us find out whether class or colour is correlated with the statistical distribution of innate ability. It is not an easy task, for ideology has soaked right into the material we are to deal with. What is ability? How can we devise measurements that separate what is innate from what is due to environment? We shall have a hard struggle to eliminate ideology from the answer, but the point is that without ideology we would never have thought of the question.

Whether or not ideology can be eliminated from the world of thought in the social sciences, it is certainly indispensable in the world of action in social life. A society cannot exist unless its members have common feelings about what is the proper way of conducting its affairs, and these common feelings are expressed in ideology. (Robinson, 1964, pp. 8–9.)

In each section of this unit a set of self assessment questions has been posed for you. Because these questions are difficult it may prove helpful to have a look at some outline answers wherever particular difficulties arise. It must be stressed that these questions are mainly open to different interpretations and, therefore, it would be sensible to expect different answers. There are seldom precisely correct answers to them and the outline answers provided are meant only as suggested models, or guides, to the form of answer.

It is not intended that there should be any significance in the different length of the outline answers, which results from tentative judgement about how much help you may need in each case.

Answers have been provided only for those questions which are numbered. The answer carries the same number. Only a few questions have no answers.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF INEQUALITY

The ideas of inequality and equality have been present in religion and philosophy from ancient times. Even when inequalities were accepted as a matter of fact in a particular society they were often condemned in some respect as morally wrong in religious thought. One may accept as an element necessary for the preservation of the existing social order that there are superior and inferior people. This does not however necessarily mean that one accepts that treating people as unequal in every respect is right. Greek philosophers commonly held the view that one had to treat categories of people as equal within that category in order to achieve some good like justice or democracy. They began to extend religious ideas of equality to secular affairs. Statements such as, all men are brothers in the eyes of God, appear to be statements of fact. They were, however, usually interpreted to be prescriptions for men to treat their fellows as though they were brothers and equals. It was held to be right, just, fair or morally good so to treat them. Conversely this prescription implied a criticism of the treatment of men by their fellows as unequal or inferior in some major respect. Such treatment was held to be bad, harmful or morally wrong. Philosophers have played an active part in articulating such criticism. They built on old established ideas of inequality and elaborated them. They reformulated old ideas of equality and prescribed their application to aspects of social life to which they had not previously been applied.

The main task performed by political philosophers has been to analyse and explain the social life of the society in which they were living. They have to work necessarily within the current culture, even when they criticized aspects of it. The questions they pose and those posed for them are surcharged with the values, ideology and culture of their society. The answers they give to these questions, whether in the form of explanations or criticisms of, or prescriptions for, the values in their society must also be surcharged by the culture.

Nevertheless the task they perform involves a refinement and clarification of the concepts that make up the ideology or belief system. It also involves an examination of the logical coherence or consistency of the beliefs held in their society. The performance of these tasks involves the philosopher in some form of scientific exercise often held to be outside his proper purview. Let us take as an example the statement that inequality of wealth is bad or harmful because it gives rise to crime. The philosopher might say that his task is merely to explore what one means by inequality of wealth. He may ask whether inequality is being used in this context in the same sense as, say, inequality of opportunity, and whether wealth means income and/or stock of wealth (see Units 5–6). Some philosophers may not wish to go further to investigate whether there is any evidence to support the connection that is being made between the inequality of wealth and crime. They may say that this is the task of the social scientist. But in any case the political philosopher is not directly concerned with what the social scientist does in a particular exercise so much as with how he does it.

Philosophers from ancient times have been interested in the credentials of all sciences and the methods used by scientists. Scientific methods of deduction and induction, the construction of models and experiments, and the processing of evidence all raise logical and methodological problems in which the philosopher is directly interested. He examines the definition and uses of concepts and the generalization of the conclusions reached by the social scientists. He is concerned with decisions about the truth or untruth of statements about inequality. He is concerned with logical problems of causal connections between ideas and beliefs about inequality and the actual inequalities existing in the society. He does not aspire to resolve problems that arise in discussions about inequality to the satisfaction of the disputants, or to himself, to the point where he can hope to move on to entirely fresh problems. But the focus of his attention may shift over time from, say, moral to economic and to legal issues about inequality.

These activities of the philosopher will become clearer when some examples of their work are looked at later, although no one individual may be seen to engage in all these activities.

Individual philosophers busy themselves with problems about the system of beliefs held by people in whatever particular way interests them. There are however schools of philosophy and shifts occur in the kind of questions that interest philosophers and the methods they employ in treating them. Something may happen or a series of events may take place that give rise to widespread doubts about the validity of existing beliefs and the values associated with them. Scientific discoveries have often been seen to be the direct cause of doubts arising about old ideas and values. Sometimes old beliefs or values are totally abandoned to the point where a revolutionary change may be said to occur. But belief systems tend to change slowly as a whole and have a high degree of flexibility. One task of the philosopher is therefore to explore what effect the partial changes have on the whole system and its coherence. A number of belief systems may be each internally consistent but in making a choice between them one is driven to explore their validity in terms of the world to which they relate. If the belief system involves moral concepts or values then the philosopher is unable to commend the acceptance of one system as against another by reference to fact. One may sometimes be able to resolve the choice partly by eliminating one or more systems by exposing the suppositions on which they rest to refution by established evidence. Claims for superiority in terms of race, sex or class can be examined in terms of the relevance of the factual suppositions advanced. Support for inequality in some respect or other has been weakened in the past by such criticism. This is especially true of writing during the nineteenth century. The extracts that follow are drawn substantially from that period and relate to the ideas that were current then rather than now.

Some of the problems faced by political philosophers are connected with the prescription of a particular value based on its alleged relationships with another value. The connection of equality with liberty or democracy is such an example. It is sometimes difficult to be certain when the writer is discussing the concept of equality or of liberty or democracy because of his close connection of the one with the other. Philosophers have often exposed the elevation of inequality or equality as a value superior to all others as a weakness in a belief system operating in a society in which the cardinal value is held to be the good life or justice. The analysis of connections between such concepts is a basic task of political philosophers. It is part of the general idea of tidying up that was referred to in the opening paragraph of the unit as the main concern of modern philosophers.

Finally before examining the work of philosophers in the past it is necessary to pick up connections with the work done in Units 1–2, where some of the relations between ideology and theory have been explored. Some of these have already been noted in the opening section of this unit. The connection between attitudes and beliefs on the one hand and the underlying political philosophies have been examined by Gallie in the Reader. Liberal and socialist ideologies have been seen as characteristic of the nineteenth century. Reference has already been made to the much older tradition associated with Plato who justified inequality in the form of an elite of guardians. Political equality is commonly associated with economic or social inequality. Liberals and some nineteenth century socialists accepted, for example, that people had the right to own unlimited numbers of shares in joint stock companies which gave them a corresponding number of votes in directing the policy of the company (economic inequality) but had only one vote in political elections (political equality). The correlation between economic and social values held by any section of society, or by society as a whole at a particular time, with political and ethical norms is usually close but seldom exact.

In this unit we examine these connections first to see how they have changed in the course of time and then also to see how philosophers have criticized the belief systems

of their own age thereby helping to justify new values. The concepts employed by philosophers take on new and usually more precise meanings. In a brief examination it is only possible to select a few passages from nineteenth century writers. They are drawn mainly from the liberal and socialist writers who wanted to extend equality at the expense of existing forms of inequality in their society. Conservative writers seldom developed an explicit philosophical defence of inequality against these attacks although they did defend the values of tradition and order that were closely associated with inequality. Before plunging into the nineteenth century arguments a brief outline of the ancient and mediaeval discussion of inequality is necessary. The arguments developed by Plato, and refined by Aristotle, dominated political philosophy until the Reformation. Equality was condemned as a concept that aroused a sense of envy and appetite for material things in human beings, leading to a levelling down of all social life to a depth of depravity in which some form of dictatorship was necessary in order to maintain the social fabric.

In the *Republic* Plato argued that men are not equal in nature. Natural aptitudes determine whether men are doctors or carpenters and in this respect they differ in quality as do men from women. Men are not born with the same capacity for learning and any attempt to level out the differences between them can only lead to the destruction of cultural values that the wise and clever alone can preserve. The order of a society is related to the ranking of people according to the function they perform in the society. Plato accused democracy of being unnatural because it was based on an artificial equality involving the treatment of equals and unequals alike without any distinction of quality. Democracy leads to an attack on all values and the destruction of all qualities. Plato was as critical of material inequality of wealth which he argued would only arise when members of the intellectual elite developed an appetite for material possessions. The oligarchy they would then establish was as evil as the democracy that would inevitably follow when the poor revolted against the wealthy. Oligarchy recognized only one form of inequality, that of wealth. Democracy would remove even this inequality and then reduce everything to tyranny.

Aristotle followed closely the argument of his teacher Plato but refined it in many respects. He accepted that the respect the democrat held for equality and the respect the oligarch had for inequality were both unjustified because justice is relative to persons as well as to things and therefore a just distribution implies the same ratio between the persons receiving and between the things given to them. Disorder was seen to be the main threat to society and Aristotle called this sedition, which he argued stems in every case from inequality when unequals are treated equally. He then went on to distinguish two kinds of equality and this distinction played a continuous role in discussions of equality later. He distinguished *numerical equality*, where everyone receives the same quantity of things, and *proportionate equality*, where everyone receives what each one deserves. He argued that the right way to proceed was to employ in some cases the principle of numerical equality and in other cases that of equality proportionate to desert. In this way one could keep both the elite and the mass of people happy and preserve the society.

The ideas developed by Plato and Aristotle dominated thought about equality throughout the mediaeval period until the Reformation. The movement of ideas from the continent to England at that time coincided with the English Civil War. The radical elements that wished to push ahead with revolutionary changes in the social order were mainly Puritan groups such as the Levellers and Diggers. They injected into the religious attacks on inequality a much stronger and more explicit demand for equality. It is for this reason that the first extract is selected from their arguments.

In the passage given below, which is taken from the edited version of the recording of the debates at Putney in October-November 1647, Colonel Thomas Rainborough, Sir John Wildman and Sir William Petty were the main spokesmen for the Levellers.

The opening section of the discussion is on the first clause in the Agreement of the People on the franchise and the Levellers supported universal franchise. In the following year when a second and third draft of the Agreement was discussed qualifications were introduced excluding Royalists for a number of years and servants and recipients of alms were excluded permanently. In the second draft even wage earners were excluded. Petty explained this in the debates by arguing that such men 'depend on the will of other men and should be afraid to displease them'.

The threat that equality presented to property and order was generally recognized by all Puritans but because they believed in the Puritan ideal of the simple life they were able to play down this threat. If people limited their wealth to what was necessary to satisfy their simplest needs and eschewed all luxuries there would be relatively little threat to order caused by greed and envy. Nevertheless there were differences of view about the seriousness of the threat. The excerpts are from Woodhouse, 1938, pp. 52–55.

The first article of the Agreement of the People called for a more equal distribution of the population in the Parliamentary constituencies. When this was debated at a meeting of the Army Council at Putney General Sir Henry Ireton opened the discussion.

H. IRETON (1611–51) AND T. RAINBOROUGH (1610–48) THE PUTNEY DEBATE (1647)

Ireton: The exception that lies in it is this. It is said, they are to be distributed according to the number of the inhabitants: 'The people of England,' *&c.* And this doth make me think that the meaning is, that every man that is an inhabitant is to be equally considered, and to have an equal voice in the election of those representers, the persons that are for the general Representative; and if that be the meaning, then I have something to say against it. But if it be only that those people that by the civil constitution of this kingdom, which is original and fundamental, and beyond which I am sure no memory of record does go ——

[*Cowling, interrupting*]*:* Not before the Conquest.

[*Ireton*]*:* But before the Conquest it was so. If it be intended that those that by that constitution that was before the Conquest, that hath been beyond memory, such persons that have been before [by] that constitution [the electors], should be [still] the electors, I have no more to say against it.

* * * * * *

Rainborough: I desired that those that had engaged in it [might be included]. For really I think that the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live, as the greatest he; and therefore truly, sir, I think it's clear, that every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government; and I do think that the poorest man in England is not at all bound in a strict sense to that government that he hath not had a voice to put himself under; and I am confident that, when I have heard the reasons against it, something will be said to answer those reasons, insomuch that I should doubt whether he was an Englishman or no, that should doubt of these things.

Ireton: That's [the meaning of] this, ['according to the number of the inhabitants')?
Give me leave to tell you, that if you make this the rule I think you must fly for refuge to an absolute natural right, and you must deny all civil right; and I am sure it will come to that in the consequence. . . .

For my part, I think it is no right at all. I think that no person hath a right to an interest or share in the disposing of the affairs of the kingdom, and in determining or choosing those that shall determine what laws we shall be ruled by here—no person hath a right to this, that hath not a permanent fixed interest in this kingdom, and those persons together are properly the represented of this kingdom, and consequently are [also] to make up the representers of this kingdom, who taken together do comprehend whatsoever is of real or permanent interest in the

kingdom. . . . This constitution hath limited and determined it that only those shall have voices in elections. It is true, as was said by a gentlemen near me, the meanest man in England ought to have [a voice in the election of the government he lives under – but only if he has some local interest]. I say this: that those that have the meanest local interest – that man that hath but forty shillings a year, he hath as great voice in the election of a knight for the shire as he that hath ten thousand a year, or more if he had never so much; and therefore there is that regard had to it.

Rainborough: . . . I do very much care whether [there be] a king or no king, lords or no lords, property or no property; and I think, if we do not all take care, we shall all have none of these very shortly. But as to this present business. I do hear nothing at all that can convince me, why any man that is born in England ought not to have his voice in election of burgeses. It is said that if a man have not a permanent interest, he can have no claim; and [that] we must be no freer than the laws will let us be, and that there is no [law in any]chronicle will let us be freer than that we [now] enjoy. Something was said to this yesterday. I do think that the main cause why Almighty God gave men reason, it was that they should make use of that reason, and that they should improve it for that end and purpose that God gave it them. And truly, I think that half a loaf is better than none if a man be anhungry: [this gift of reason without other property may seem, a small thing], yet I think there is nothing that God hath given a man that any [one] else can take from him. And therefore I say, that either it must be the Law of God or the law of man that must prohibit the meanest man in the kingdom to have this benefit as well as the greatest. I do not find anything in the Law of God, that a lord shall choose twenty burgeses, and a gentleman but two, or a poor man shall choose none: I find no such thing in the Law of Nature, nor in the Law of Nations. . . .

Ireton: I think I agreed to this matter, that all should be equally distributed. But the question is, whether it should be distributed to all persons, or whether the same persons that are the electors [now] should be the electors still, and it [be] equally distributed amongst *them*. I do not see anybody else that makes this objection; and if nobody else be sensible of it I shall soon have done. Only I shall a little crave your leave to represent the consequences of it, and clear myself from one thing that was misrepresented by the gentleman that sat next to me. I think, if the gentleman remember himself, he cannot but remember that what I said was to this effect: that if I saw the hand of God leading so far as to destroy King, and destroy Lords, and destroy property, and [leave] no such thing at all amongst us, I should acquiesce in it; and so I did not care, if no king, no lords, or no property [should] be, in comparison of the tender care that I have of the honour of God, and of the people of God, whose [good] name is so much concerned in this Army. This I did deliver [so], and not absolutely.

All the main thing that I speak for, is because I would have an eye to property. I hope we do not come to contend for victory – but let every man consider with himself that he do not go that way to take away all property. For here is the case of the most fundamental part of the constitution of the kingdom, which if you take away, you take away all by that. Here men of this and this quality are determined to be the electors of men to the Parliament, and they are all those who have any permanent interest in the kingdom, and who, taken together, do comprehend the whole [permanent, local] interest of the kingdom. I mean by permanent [and] local, that [it] is not [able to be removed] anywhere else. As for instance he that hath a freehold, and that freehold cannot be removed out of the kingdom; and so there is a [freeman of a] corporation, a place which hath the privilege of a market and trading, which if you should allow to all places equally, I do not see how you could preserve any peace in the kingdom. . . .

Now that you have read these excerpts from the Army Council debate try to answer the following questions with reference to the text.

Question 4 How do you distinguish the two concepts of equality in the minds of Ireton and Rainborough?

Question 5 Do the issues touched on in these excerpts concern only the question of the franchise or do they involve social and economic matters also?

Question 6 Can you find in these discussions any echo of the ideas of numerical and proportionate equality?

Question 7 What elements of democracy and/or oligarchy can you detect in Ireton's ideology?

Question 8 Does the argument that 'the meanest man ought to have a voice in the election of the government he lives under' mean necessarily that foreign and immigrant workers cannot be excluded?

J.-J. ROUSSEAU (1712–78) ***DISCOURSE ON THE ORIGIN OF INEQUALITY AMONG MEN*** (1755).

Rousseau sees the source of inequality among men not in nature, where men lived a life of primitive equality, but in the artificial state of society, where men became passionate and vain. There is a general decline of man from innocence to depravity. He dedicates the essay to Geneva, his native town.

> Having had the happiness to be born among you, how could I reflect on the equality which nature has ordained between men and the inequality which they have introduced, without reflecting on the profound wisdom by which both are in this State happily combined and made to coincide, in the manner that is most in conformity with natural law, and most favourable to society, to the maintenance of public order and to the happiness of individuals?

Unfortunately this happy combination was only possible in his judgement in a small community. Rousseau in the passage talks of revolutions, but by this he means social change, as did all writers in the eighteenth century. This is a social revolution in the sense of a process of change rather like the economic historian talks of the industrial revolution and is very different from the sense of socio-economic or political revolution in the Cromwellian revolution or the Russian Revolution of 1917. The closed circle of the French aristocracy, described in relation to the British aristocracy by Tocqueville in a later extract,was coming under attack during the French Enlightenment. Equality was the slogan used by those who wanted to accelerate the pace of change but as the dedication implied Rousseau was for a balance between equality and inequality. The extracts are from the Cole, 1913 edn., pp. 192, 199, 201–3, 214–5, 216–8, and 221.

> The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, bethought himself of saying 'this is mine', and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society. From how many crimes, wars, and murders, from how many horrors and misfortunes might not any one have saved mankind, by pulling up the stakes, or filling up the ditch, and crying to his fellows: 'Beware of listening to this imposter; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to nobody.' But there is great probability that things had then already come to such a pitch, that they could no longer continue as they were; for the idea of property depends on many prior ideas, which could only be acquired successively, and cannot have been formed all at once in the human mind. Mankind must have made very considerable progress, and acquired considerable knowledge and industry which they must also have transmitted and increased from age to age, before they arrived at this last point of the state of nature.
>
> So long as men remained content with their rustic huts, so long as they were satisfied with clothes made of the skins of animals and sewn together with thorns and

fish-bones, adorned themselves only with feathers and shells, and continued to paint their bodies different colours, to improve and beautify their bows and arrows, and to make with sharp-edged stones fishing boats or clumsy musical instruments; in a word, so long as they undertook only what a single person could accomplish, and confined themselves to such arts as did not require the joint labour of several hands, they lived free, healthy, honest, and happy lives, so long as their nature allowed, and as they continued to enjoy the pleasures of mutual and independent intercourse. But from the moment one man began to stand in need of the help of another; from the moment it appeared advantageous to any one man to have enough provisions for two, equality disappeared, property was introduced, work became indispensable, and vast forests became smiling fields, which man had to water with the sweat of his brow, and where slavery and misery were soon seen to germinate and grow up with the crops.

Metallurgy and agriculture were the two arts which produced this great revolution. The poets tell us it was gold and silver, but, for the philosophers, it was iron and corn, which first civilized men, and ruined humanity. Thus both were unknown to the savages of America, who for that reason are still savage: the other nations also seem to have continued in a state of barbarism while they practised only one of these arts. One of the best reasons, perhaps, why Europe has been, if not longer, at least more constantly and highly civilized than the rest of the world, is that it is at once the most abundant in iron and the most fertile in corn. . . .

The cultivation of the earth necessarily brought about its distribution; and property, once recognized, gave rise to the first rules of justice; for, to secure each man his own, it had to be possible for each to have something. Besides, as men began to look forward to the future, and all had something to lose, every one had reason to apprehend that reprisals would follow any injury he might do to another. This origin is so much the more natural, as it is impossible to conceive how property can come from anything but manual labour: for what else can a man add to things which he does not originally create, so as to make them his own property? It is the husbandman's labour alone that, giving him a title to the produce of the ground he has tilled, gives him a claim also to the land itself, at least till harvest; and so, from year to year, a constant possession which is easily transformed into property. When the ancients, says Grotius, gave to Ceres the title of Legislatrix, and to a festival celebrated in her honour the name of Thesmophoria, they meant by that that the distribution of lands had produced a new kind of right: that is to say, the right of property, which is different from the right deducible from the law of nature.

In this state of affairs, equality might have been sustained, had the talents of individuals been equal, and had, for example, the use of iron and the consumption of commodities always exactly balanced each other; but, as there was nothing to preserve this balance, it was soon disturbed; the strongest did most work; the most skilful turned his labour to best account; the most ingenious devised methods of diminishing his labour: the husbandman wanted more iron, or the smith more corn, and, while both laboured equally, the one gained a great deal by his work, while the other could hardly support himself. Thus natural inequality unfolds itself insensibly with that of combination, and the difference between men, developed by their different circumstances, becomes more sensible and permanent in its effects, and begins to have an influence, in the same proportion, over the lot of individuals.

It now became the interest of men to appear what they really were not. To be and to seem became two totally different things; and from this distinction sprang insolent pomp and cheating trickery, with all the numerous vices that go in their train. On the other hand, free and independent as men were before, they were now, in consequence of a multiplicity of new wants, brought into subjection, as it were, to all nature, and particularly to one another; and each became in some degree a slave even in becoming the master of other men: if rich, they stood in need of the services of others; if poor, of their assistance; and even a middle condition did not enable them to do without one another. Man must now, therefore

have been perpetually employed in getting others to interest themselves in his lot, and making them, apparently at least, if not really, find their advantage in promoting his own. Thus he must have been sly and artful in his behaviour to some and imperious and cruel to others; being under a kind of necessity to ill-use all the persons of whom he stood in need, when he could not frighten them into compliance, and did not judge it his interest to be useful to them. Insatiable ambition, the thirst of raising their respective fortunes, not so much from real want as from the desire to surpass others, inspired all men with a vile propensity to injure one another, and with a secret jealousy: which is the more dangerous, as it puts on the mask of benevolence, to carry its point with greater security. In a word, there arose rivalry and competition on the one hand, and conflicting interests on the other, together with a secret desire on both of profiting at the expense of others. All these evils were the first effects of property, and the inseparable attendants of growing inequality.

Before the invention of signs to represent riches, wealth could hardly consist in anything but lands and cattle, the only real possessions men can have. But, when inheritances so increased in number and extent as to occupy the whole of the land, and to border on one another, one man could aggrandize himself only at the expense of another; at the same time the supernumeraries, who had been too weak or too indolent to make such acquisitions, and had grown poor without sustaining any loss, because while they saw everything change around them, they remained still the same, were obliged to receive their subsistence, or steal it, from the rich; and this soon bred, according to their different characters, dominion and slavery, or violence and rapine. The wealthy, on their part, had no sooner begun to taste the pleasure of command, than they disdained all others, and, using their old slaves to acquire new, thought of nothing but subduing and enslaving their neighbours; like ravenous wolves, which, having once tasted human flesh, despise every other food and thenceforth seek only men to devour. . . .

If we follow the progress of inequality in these various revolutions, we shall find that the establishment of laws and of the right of property was its first term, the institution of magistracy the second, and the conversion of legitimate into arbitrary power the third and last; so that the condition of rich and poor was authorized by the first period; that of powerful and weak by the second; and only by the third that of master and slave, which is the last degree of inequality, and the term at which all the rest remain, when they have got so far, till the government is either entirely dissolved by new revolutions, or brought back to legitimacy.

If this were the place to go into details, I could readily explain how, even without the intervention of government, inequality of credit and authority became unavoidable among private persons, as soon as their union in single society made them compare themselves one with another, and take into account the differences which they found out from the continual intercourse every man had to have with his neighbours. These differences are of several kinds; but riches, nobility or rank, power and personal merit being the principal distinctions by which men form an estimate of each other in society. I could prove that the harmony or conflict of these different forces is the surest indication of the good or bad constitution of a State. I could show that among these four kinds of inequality, personal qualities being the origin of all the others, wealth is the one to which they are all reduced in the end; for, as riches tend most immediately to the prosperity of individuals, and are easiest to communicate, they are used to purchase every other distinction. By this observation we are enabled to judge pretty exactly how far a people has departed from its primitive constitution, and of its progress towards the extreme term of corruption. I could explain how much this universal desire for reputation, honours, and advancement, which inflames us all, exercises and holds up to comparison our faculties and powers; how it excites and multiplies our passions, and, by creating universal competition and rivalry, or rather enmity, among men, occasions numberless failures, successes, and disturbances of all kinds by making so many aspirants run the same course. I could show that it is to this desire of being talked about, and this unremitting rage of distinguishing ourselves, that we owe the best and the worst things we possess, both our virtues

and our vices, our science and our errors, our conquerors and our philosophers; that is to say, a great many bad things, and a very few good ones. In a word, I could prove that, if we have a few rich and powerful men on the pinnacle of fortune and grandeur, while the crowd grovels in want and obscurity, it is because the former prize what they enjoy only in so far as others are destitute of it; and because, without changing their condition, they would cease to be happy the moment the people ceased to be wretched.

These details alone, however, would furnish matter for a considerable work, in which the advantages of every kind of government might be weighed, as they are related to man in the state of nature, and at the same time all the different aspects, under which inequality has up to the present appeared, or may, appear in ages yet to come, according to the nature of the several governments, and the alterations which time must unavoidably occasion in them, might be demonstrated. We should then see the multitude oppressed from within, in consequence of the very precautions it had taken to guard against foreign tyranny. We should see oppression continually gain ground without its being possible for the oppressed to know where it would stop, or what legitimate means was left them of checking its progress. We should see the rights of citizens and the freedom of nations slowly extinguished, and the complaints, protests, and appeals of the weak treated as seditious murmurings. We should see the honour of defending the common cause confined by statecraft to a mercenary part of the people. We should see taxes made necessary by such means, and the disheartened husbandman deserting his fields even in the midst of peace, and leaving the plough to gird on the sword. We should see fatal and capricious codes of honour established; and the champions of their country sooner or later becoming its enemies, and for ever holding their daggers to the breasts of their fellow-citizens. . . .

I have endeavoured to trace the origin and progress of inequality, and the institution and abuse of political societies, as far as these are capable of being deduced from the nature of man merely by the light of reason, and independently of those sacred dogmas which give the sanction of divine right to sovereign authority. It follows from this survey that, as there is hardly any inequality in the state of nature, all the inequality which now prevails owes its strength and growth to the development of our faculties and the advance of the human mind, and becomes at last permanent and legitimate by the establishment of property and laws. Secondly, it follows that moral inequality, authorized by positive right alone, clashes with natural right, whenever it is not proportionate to physical inequality – a distinction which sufficiently determines what we ought to think of that species of inequality which prevails in all civilized countries; since it is plainly contrary to the law of nature, however defined, that children should command old men, fools wise men, and that the privileged few should gorge themselves with superfluities, while the starving multitude are in want of the bare necessities of life.

AT THIS POINT YOU SHOULD READ THE FIRST HALF OF THE ARTICLE BY PAUL HIRST ENTITLED 'POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND EGALITARIANISM, ROUSSEAU AND MARX' IN THE COURSE READER.

The second half of this article will be relevant to the examination of the views of Marx and Engels later in this unit.)

In this the author presents what he calls 'a classic example of egalitarian political theory, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's account of the origin of inequality and the means for overcoming it'. Rousseau looks, at first sight, to be arguing in favour of equality, both economic and political. Unlike nineteenth century liberals Rousseau was in favour of economic equality, as the final sentence from our extract shows. But he was opposed, Hirst argues, to levelling and ultra-democratism. Political and economic equality are not to be held as ends in themselves but as means to freedom.

In the argument advanced by Hirst, Rousseau is shown to be aware of the process operating in society that gives rise to inequality (which was emphasized towards the

end of Units 1–2) and the need to provide legislation to maintain equality. The final paragraph of the extract shows Rousseau to be arguing from the nature of man revealed by the light of reason. But here again he balances moral inequality, authorized by positive right, against physical inequality, based on natural right, whenever the former is not proportionate to the latter.

The social contract was, for Rousseau, the means whereby society was transformed from one in which physical inequalities counted to one in which moral equality alone mattered. He argues that the contract does not destroy natural inequality but 'substitutes, for such physical inequality as nature may have set up between men, an equality that is moral and legitimate, and that men, who may be unequal in strength and intelligence, become every one equal by convention and legal right'. It was the means whereby the four kinds of inequality he distinguishes (riches, rank, power and personal merit) are overcome as sources of conflict in society and become the sources of harmony.

Question 9 What was it according to Rousseau that made equality disappear?

Question 10 Did Rousseau believe men were equal in talents?

Question 11 What part did the increase in wants play in Rousseau's argument?

Question 12 What part did inheritance play in Rousseau's argument?

Question 13 How does Rousseau see the outcome of the conflict between equality and inequality?

Question 14 How well does Rousseau establish the bases for inequality in society? In what respects have they changed since his day? What current evidence can you find for the belief that the strongest do most of the work, the most skilful (in what respects) turn their labour to best account and the most ingenious devise methods of diminishing their labour?

Question 15 In what sense does Rousseau use the idea of exploitation?

A. de TOCQUEVILLE (1805–59) *JOURNEYS TO ENGLAND AND IRELAND*, 1833–5.

No one in the nineteenth century did more to bring out the importance of equality as an idea than the French aristocrat, Alexis de Tocqueville. He regarded it as the keynote of a new social and political order that was developing in America and spreading from there to Europe. Writing about his visit to America in the early 1830's, before his visit to England, he said:

> No novelty in the United States struck me more vividly during my stay than the equality of conditions. It was easy to see the immense influence of this basic fact on the whole course of society. It gives a particular turn to public opinion and a particular twist to the laws, new maxims to those who govern and particular habits to the governed.

He discerned a natural progression of man towards democracy and equality which he saw was pointless to resist. Nevertheless a study of the causes of this progression would enable men to avoid its worst evils. The greatest evil he saw to be the willingness of men to sacrifice liberty for equality. The aristocracy had, especially in France, presented a strong and independent bulwark against the arbitrary power of the monarch, and thus provided a guarantee for liberty. The destruction of the aristocratic order that came with the march towards equality meant a sacrifice of liberty. It also meant a weakening of the human spirit with a growing emphasis on material values. All of these evils could be moderated by a sensible system of government, and the wise collaboration of the aristocracy in its operation which he noted with approval in

England. The following extracts are from de Tocqueville, 1958 edition, pp. 59–61, and 67–68.

The English aristocracy has been adroit in more than one respect.

First of all it has always been involved in public affairs; it has taken the initiative in protecting its rights; it has talked a great deal about liberty.

But what distinguishes it from all others is the ease with which it has opened its ranks. It is often said that in England men of all social ranks could rise to important positions. This was, I believe, much less true than was thought: what was taken for a rule, was in fact a rare exception. In general the aristocracy had everything at its disposal. But, with great riches, anybody could hope to enter into the ranks of the aristocracy. Furthermore since everybody could hope to become rich, especially in such a mercantile country as England, a peculiar position arose in that their privileges, which raised such feeling against the aristocrats of other countries, were the thing that most attached the English to theirs. As everybody had the hope of being among the privileged, the privileges made the aristocracy not more hated, but more valued. The reason why the French nobles were the butt of all hatreds, was not chiefly that only the nobles had the right to everything, but because nobody could become a noble. It is this happy combination which made and still makes the power of the aristocracy in England. The English aristocracy in feelings and prejudices resembles all the aristocracies of the world, but it is not in the least founded on birth, that inaccessible thing, but on wealth that everyone can acquire, and this one difference makes it stand, while the others succumb either to the people or to the King.

The aristocracy in England has thus even in our time a power and a force of resistance which it is very difficult for a Frenchman to understand. Those general conceptions which he has formed in his own country or in many others concerning the strength or weakness of aristocracy, must be forgotten here, where he finds himself on entirely new ground.

However the English aristocracy now seems to me to be exposed to dangers to which it will finally succumb.

I remarked earlier that the strength of the English aristocracy did not depend only on itself, but on the feelings of all classes who hope to enter into its ranks. This applied most strongly the nearer a man approached it and so the better were his chances of sharing its privileges. Thus the banker who was a millionaire already and would soon be a great landowner, supported the aristocracy more than did an ordinary London merchant, and the latter more than a shopkeeper, and he in his turn more than a worker.

But in our time the classes who have almost no hope of sharing the privileges of the aristocracy, have become more numerous than they ever were before; they are more enlightened and see more clearly what I have just said. In the classes which have a chance of gaining the privileges of the aristocracy, there is a crowd of people who realize that they can reach this position more quickly by another way. That democratic spirit which in Europe one calls the French spirit, has made startling progress among them.

In any case I believe that the English aristocracy would be in a good position to fight the general difficulties of its present situation, based as it is on the riches and the *instincts* of the nation, if it could provide, as before, material prosperity for the lower classes. For the man of the people to be satisfied in a sphere from which it is almost impossible for him to escape, he must be fairly well-off there. This is more especially true in such a time of intellectual ferment and moral restlessness as ours. But the English people are afflicted by real and profound hardships.

A Frenchman on seeing England for the first time is struck by the apparent comfort and cannot imagine why people complain. But under this brilliant surface are hidden very deep distresses. Moreover one should judge by comparisons here; experience proves that people demand fictitious necessities almost as imperiously as

natural ones. So it comes about that so many people kill themselves for evils which seem imaginary to their neighbours. In the same way, for the English the lack of certain superfluities to which they have become accustomed by long habit, is as grave as a lack of food or clothing for a Russian. It stirs up in him a feeling of irritation and impatience at least as great.

The aristocracy has thus not only to fight against the difficulties common to all aristocracies in our time, but also against passions aroused by suffering or at least by lack of comfort.

I still persist in believing that if the aristocracy could form a compact body with all the other classes who have some hope of sharing their privileges, it would succeed in holding out, for nothing is more difficult than for a people to make a revolution all by itself.

But that is not how things are. With every increase in the power of democracy the number of people will grow greater who prefer the quicker chances of advancement which it can give, to the more distant ones which the aristocracy offers. Thus up to the present the people enjoy the support of many men whose birth or position should put them on the side of the aristocracy.

Furthermore the first ranks of the nobility have contrived to alienate the second ranks, with the result that the latter no longer support the former as they always did in the past. The fact is that for three years now the House of Lords has seemed isolated in the country. A time will no doubt come when, the danger becoming imminent for the whole aristocracy, the second rank will rally to the first, but by then the revolution will be too far advanced to be stopped.

The power of the aristocracy in England, which could be called the domination of the richer classes, is however losing its scope. This is due to several reasons.

The first results from the general movement common to humanity the world over in our time. The century is primarily democratic. Democracy is like a rising tide; it only recoils to come back with greater force, and soon one sees that for all its fluctuations it is always gaining ground. The immediate future of European society is completely democratic: this can in no way be doubted. Thus the common people in England are beginning to get the idea that they, too, can take a part in government. The class placed immediately above it, but which has not yet played a notable part in the course of events, especially shows this ill-defined urge for growth and for power, and is becoming more numerous and more restless day by day. Furthermore the discomforts and real poverty suffered in England in our time, give birth to ideas and excite passions which would perhaps have long continued to sleep if the State had been prosperous.

So a gradual development of the democratic principle must follow from the irresistible march of events. Daily some further privilege of the aristocracy comes under attack; it is a slow war waged about details, but infallibly in time it will bring the whole edifice down.

Moreover the same cause now increases the strength of democracy in England as it once helped to maintain the long domination of the aristocracy; for there is no absolute truth or good in human affairs.

When a body is composed of a limited number of members, clearly defined and exclusively possessing certain privileges, like the nobility in France, such a body makes itself prey to frightful hatreds, but when attacked it defends itself like a single man, all its members having a clear and certain interest in defending the whole body.

Thus at the time of the French Revolution all the nobles took a common line. If the effort had been as well organized as it was great, their resistance might perhaps have been successful.

But in England where the limits of the aristocracy are unknown, there are many of its members who share democratic ideas up to a point or see advantage to them-

selves in extending popular power. It thus happens that on many questions the House of Lords is of one opinion, but all the rest of the aristocracy is with the people. On one side there is continual attack, and on the other divided and often weak resistance.

Therefore the English aristocracy will fall more slowly and less violently than the French, but I think that it will fall as inevitably.

These are the general reasons that make me believe that England is not threatened, as is generally believed in France, by a violent and rapid change in its social state.

Question 16 To what did Tocqueville attribute the decline in the scope of the power of the aristocracy in England?

Question 17 What did Tocqueville regard as the wise course of action for the British aristocracy in the face of a threat from the lower classes?

Question 18 Is there any reflection of the idea of a balance between oligarchy and democracy in these passages?

Question 19 What current examples can you find of the acquisition of equality of status leading to the loss of liberty?

Can one demonstrate that inequality helps to preserve liberty?
(This is one of the open questions for which no answer is provided.)

J. S. MILL (1806–73) *PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY* (1848)

In the second half of the nineteenth century the debate between supporters of equality against those of inequality increasingly centred on the issue of personal liberty. Mill argued thus:

> We hold with Bentham, that equality, though not the sole end, is one of the ends of good social arrangements; and that a system of institutions which does not make the scale turn in favour of equality, when this can be done without impairing the securing of the property which is the product and reward of personal exertion, is essentially a bad government – a government for the few, to the injury of the many.

Mill rejected much of Tocqueville's argument which attributed all the evils of industrial civilization to equality. Tocqueville had argued that the passion for equality in America at the beginning of the nineteenth century had arisen out of envy and was leading to the destruction of individuality. Mill rejected this explanation. Individuals felt powerless in the face of mass society, Mill said, not because of equality but because of its enormous size. Mill was an enlightened member of the middle class who thought it would be willing to share power with the working class when the latter showed its members were ready to exercise it. In this way he became a bridge between the liberal ideas of the first half of the century and the socialist ideas of the last half.

The following extracts are from Mill, J. S. 6th edition, 1865, pp. 123–5, 457, 458, 459 and 461.

> The laws and conditions of the production of wealth, partake of the character of physical truths. There is nothing optional, or arbitrary in them. Whatever mankind produce, must be produced in the modes, and under the conditions, imposed by the constitution of external things, and by the inherent properties of their own bodily and mental structure. Whether they like it or not, their productions will be limited by the amount of their previous accumulation, and, that being given, it will be proportional to their energy, their skill, the perfection of their machinery, and their judicious use of the advantages of combined labour. . . .

* * * * * *

It is not so with the Distribution of Wealth. That is a matter of human institution solely. The things once there, mankind, individually or collectively, can do with them as they like. They can place them at the disposal of whomsoever they please, and on whatever terms. Further, in the social state, in every state except total solitude, any disposal whatever of them can only take place by the consent of society, or rather of those who dispose of its active force. Even what a person has produced by his individual toil, unaided by any one, he cannot keep, unless by the permission of society. Not only can society take it from him, but individuals could and would take it from him, if society only remained passive; if it did not either interfere *en masse*, or employ and pay people for the purpose of preventing him from being disturbed in the possession. The distribution of wealth, therefore, depends on the laws and customs of society. The rules by which it is determined, are what the opinions and feelings of the ruling portion of the community make them, and are very different in different ages and countries; and might be still more different, if mankind so chose.

The opinions and feelings of mankind, doubtless, are not a matter of chance. They are consequences of the fundamental laws of human nature, combined with the existing state of knowledge and experience, and the existing condition of social institutions and intellectual and moral culture. But the laws of the generation of human opinions are not within our present subject. They are part of the general theory of human progress, a far larger and more difficult subject of inquiry than political economy. We have here to consider, not the causes, but the consequences of the rules according to which wealth may be distributed. Those, at least, are as little arbitrary, and have as much the character of physical laws, as the laws of production. Human beings can control their own acts, but not the consequences of their acts either to themselves or to others. Society can subject the distribution of wealth to whatever rules it thinks best; but what practical results will flow from the operation of those rules, must be discovered, like any other physical or mental truths, by observation and reasoning. . . .

Private property, as an institution, did not owe its origin to any of those considerations of utility, which plead for the maintenance of it when established. Enough is known of rude ages, both from history and from analogous states of society in our own time, to show that tribunals (which always precede laws) were originally established, not to determine rights but to repress violence and terminate quarrels. With this object chiefly in view, they naturally enough gave legal effect to first occupancy, by treating as the aggressor the person who first commenced violence, by turning, or attempting to turn, another out of possession. The preservation of the peace, which was the original object of civil government, was thus attained; while by confirming, to those who already possessed it, even what was not the fruit of personal exertion, a guarantee was incidentally given to them and others that they would be protected in what was so. . . .

If private property were adopted, we must presume that it would be accompanied by none of the initial inequalities and injustices which obstruct the beneficial operation of the principle in old societies. Every full-grown man or woman, we must suppose, would be secured in the unfettered use and disposal of his or her bodily and mental faculties; and the instruments of production, the land and tools, would be divided fairly among them, so that all might start, in respect to outward appliances, on equal terms. It is possible also to conceive that in this original apportionment, compensation might be made for the injuries of nature, and the balance redressed by assigning to the less robust members of the community advantages in the distribution, sufficient to put them on a par with the rest. But the division, once made, would not again be interfered with; individuals would be left to their own exertions and to the ordinary chances, for making an advantageous use of what was assigned to them. If individual property, on the contrary, were excluded, the plan which must be adopted would be to hold the land and all instruments of production as the joint property of the community, and to carry on the operations of industry on the common account. The direction of the labour of the community would devolve upon a magistrate or magistrates,

whom we may suppose elected by the suffrages of the community, and whom we must assume to be voluntarily obeyed by them. The division of the produce would in like manner be a public act. The principle might either be that of complete equality, or of apportionment to the necessities or deserts of individuals, in whatever manner might be conformable to the ideas of justice or policy prevailing in the community.

Examples of such associations, on a small scale, are the monastic orders, the Moravians, the followers of Rapp, and others: and from the hopes which they hold out of relief from the miseries and iniquities of a state of much inequality of wealth, schemes for a larger application of the same idea have reappeared and become popular at all periods of active speculation on the first principles of society. In an age like the present, when a general reconsideration of all first principles is felt to be inevitable, and when more than at any former period of history the suffering portions of the community have a voice in the discussion, it was impossible but that ideas of this nature would spread far and wide. The late revolutions in Europe have thrown up a great amount of speculation of this character, and an unusual share of attention has consequently been drawn to the various forms which these ideas have assumed: nor is this atttention likely to diminish, but on the contrary, to increase more and more.

The assailants of the principle of individual property may be divided into two classes: those whose scheme implies absolute equality in the distribution of the physical means of life and enjoyment, and those who admit inequality, but grounded on some principle, or supposed principle, of justice or general expediency, and not, like so many of the existing social inequalities, dependent on accident alone. . . .

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Of the working men, at least in the more advanced countries of Europe, it may be pronounced certain, that the patriarchal or paternal system of government is one to which they will not again be subject. That question was decided, when they were taught to read, and allowed access to newspapers and political tracts; when dissenting preachers were suffered to go among them, and appeal to their faculties and feelings in opposition to the creeds professed and countenanced by their superiors; when they were brought together in numbers, to work socially under the same roof; when railways enabled them to shift from place to place, and change their patrons and employers as easily as their coats; when they were encouraged to seek a share in the government, by means of the electoral franchise. The working classes have taken their interests into their own hands, and are perpetually showing that they think the interests of their employers not identical with their own, but opposite to them. Some among the higher classes flatter themselves that these tendencies may be counteracted by moral and religious education; but they have let the time go by for giving an education which can serve their purpose. The principles of the Reformation have reached as low down in society as reading and writing, and the poor will not much longer accept morals and religion of other people's prescribing. . . .

. . . there is reason to hope that great improvements both in the quality and quantity of school education will be effected by the exertions either of Government or of individuals, and that the progress of the mass of the people in mental cultivation, and in the virtues which are dependent on it, will take place more rapidly, and with fewer intermittences and aberrations, than if left to itself.

From this increase of intelligence, several effects may be confidently anticipated. First: that they will become even less willing than at present to be led and governed, and directed into the way they should go, by the mere authority and *prestige* of superiors. If they have not now, still less will they have hereafter, any deferential awe, or religious principle of obedience, holding them in mental subjection to a class above them. The theory of dependence and protection will be more and more intolerable to them, and they will require that their conduct and condition shall be essentially self-governed. It is, at the same time, quite possible

that they may demand, in many cases, the intervention of the legislature in their affairs, and the regulation by law of various things which concern them, often under very mistaken ideas of their interest. Still, it is their own will, their own ideas and suggestions, to which they will demand that effect should be given, and not rules laid down for them by other people. It is quite consistent with this, that they should feel respect for superiority of intellect and knowledge, and defer much to the opinions, on any subject, of those whom they think well acquainted with it. Such deference is deeply grounded in human nature; but they will judge for themselves of the persons who are and are not entitled to it.

It appears to me impossible but that the increase of intelligence, of education, and of the love of independence among the working classes, must be attended with a corresponding growth of the good sense which manifests itself in provident habits of conduct, and that population, therefore, will bear a gradually diminishing ratio to capital and employment. This most desirable result would be much accelerated by another change, which lies in the direct line of the best tendencies of the time; the opening of industrial occupations freely to both sexes. The same reasons which make it no longer necessary that the poor should depend on the rich, make it equally unnecessary that women should depend on men, and the least which justice requires is that law and custom should not enforce dependence (when the correlative protection has become superflous) by ordaining that a woman, who does not happen to have a provision by inheritance, shall have scarcely any means open to her of gaining a livelihood, except as a wife and mother. Let women who prefer that occupation, adopt it; but that there should be no option, no other career possible for the great majority of women, except in the humbler departments of life, is a flagrant social injustice. The ideas and institutions by which the accident of sex is made the groundwork of an inequality of legal rights and a forced dissimilarity of social functions, must ere long be recognized as the greatest hindrance to moral, social, and even intellectual improvement. On the present occasion I shall only indicate, among the probable consequences of the industrial and social independence of women, a great diminution of the evil of over-population. It is by devoting one-half of the human species to that exclusive function, by making it fill the entire life of one sex, and interweave itself with almost all the objects of the other, that the animal instinct in question is nursed into the disproportionate preponderance which it has hitherto exercised in human life. . . .

The speculations and discussions of the last fifty years, and the events of the last twenty, are abundantly conclusive on this point. If the improvement which even triumphant military despotism has only retarded, not stopped, shall continue its course, there can be little doubt that the *status* of hired labourers will gradually tend to confine itself to the description of workpeople whose low moral qualities render them unfit for anything more independent: and that the relation of masters and workpeople will be gradually superseded by partnership, in one of two forms: in some cases, association of the labourers with the capitalist; in others, and perhaps finally in all, association of labourers among themselves.

Question 20 In the distribution of wealth how did Mill justify the choice between exact and proportionate equality?

Question 21 What importance did Mill attach to the growing opposition of the working class to their employers?

Question 22 Why did Mill hold out so much hope for the education of the working class?

Question 23 In what significant respects do Mill's arguments form a bridge between liberalism and socialism?

Question 24 Does Mill's account of the process by which the working class became aware of equality make good sense?

K. MARX (1818–83) and **FREDERICK ENGELS** (1820–95) *ANTI-DÜHRING* 1878

In Units 1–2, especially in the third part dealing with stratification and class, reference has been made to the writings and theories of Karl Marx. The *Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* and *The Communist Manifesto* were set reading for Units 1–2 and Marx's theory of social change involving class conflict has been outlined as an explanatory model. It is also seen to be the basis for many ideological statements. The extract given here is taken from *Anti-Dühring* and this should be read along with the second half of the Hirst article (see the extract from Rousseau, p. 16.)

Hirst is concerned to explore the argument used by Marx in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (reprinted in Supplementary material) which is mainly based on the point that has already been established in Units 1–2 i.e. that the social processes giving rise to inequality take place in production of wealth and cannot be eradicated merely by adjustments in the distribution of wealth. Inequalities are products of the social system and will vary from capitalism to socialism to communism because the social systems peculiar to each of these are different. 'What *can* be distributed and how it is distributed depend on the system of production'. This applies not merely to the material goods but also to the whole system of social relations. Hirst goes on to show in effect that Marx demonstrates that numerical equality can only give rise to inequality because it involves the reduction of all qualities to one common standard of quantity. Equal right then becomes a right of inequality. The argument can be extended to apply to proportionate equality also. Inequalities arising from class differences can only be eliminated in the long run by those who are at a disadvantage in a given social system changing that system. The argument serves both to trace the development of the idea of equality back to the eighteenth century and to show that it continues to be a popular prejudice.

Anti-Dühring is a polemical attack by Engels on a minor German idealist named Dühring. He read the manuscript to Marx before it was printed and Marx wrote a small section himself. It was an attempt to expound the views that Marx and Engels had developed in the first twenty years of their collaboration, ranging over the whole field of natural and social philosophy, 'a more or less connected exposition of the dialectical method and of the communist world outlook represented by Marx and myself'.

Marx had demonstrated the way in which the eighteenth century idea of equality had been realized in practice in the development of capitalism in *Capital* in the historical chapters of Volume 1. Engels summarized the history and analysis in the following passage which is from the English translation of 1934, pp. 116–121.

> The idea that all men, as men, have something in common, and that they are therefore equal so far as these common characteristics go, is of course primeval. But the modern demand for equality is something entirely different from that; this consists rather in deducing from those common characteristics of humanity, from that equality of men as men, a claim to equal political or social status for all human beings, or at least for all citizens of a state or all members of a society. Before the original conception of relative equality could lead to the conclusion that men should have equal rights in the state and in society, before this conclusion could appear to be something even natural and self-evident, however, thousands of years had to pass and did pass. In the oldest primitive communities equality of rights existed at most for members of the community; women, slaves and strangers were excluded from this equality as a matter of course. Among the Greeks and Romans the inequalities of men were of greater importance than any form of equality. It would necessarily have seemed idiotic to the ancients that Greeks and barbarians, freemen and slaves, citizens and dependents, Roman citizens and Roman subjects (to use a comprehensive term) should have a claim

to equal political status. Under the Roman Empire all these distinctions gradually disappeared, except the distinction between freemen and slaves, and in this way there arose, for the freemen at least, that equality as between private individuals on the basis of which Roman law developed – the completest elaboration of law based on private property which we know. But so long as the distinction between freemen and slaves existed, there could be no talk of drawing legal conclusions from the fact of general equality *as men*; and we saw this again quite recently, in the slave-owning states of the North American Union.

Christianity knew only *one* point in which all men were equal: that all were equally born in original sin – which corresponded perfectly with its character as the religion of the slaves and the oppressed. Apart from this it recognized, at most, the equality of the elect, which however was only stressed at the very beginning. The traces of common ownership which are also found in the early stages of the new religion can be ascribed to the solidarity of a proscribed sect rather than to real equalitarian ideas. Within a very short time the establishment of the distinction between priests and laymen put an end even to this tendency to Christian equality. The overrunning of Western Europe by the Germans abolished for centuries all ideas of equality, through the gradual building up of a complicated social and political hierarchy such as had never before existed. But at the same time the invasion drew Western and Central Europe into the course of historical development, created for the first time a compact cultural area, and within this area also for the first time a system of predominantly national states exerting mutual influence on each other and mutually holding each other in check. Thereby it prepared the ground on which alone the question of the equal status of men, of the rights of man, could at a later period be raised.

The feudal middle ages also developed in its womb the class which was destined in the future course of its evolution to be the standard-bearer of the modern demand for equality: the bourgeoisie. Itself in its origin one of the 'estates' of the feudal order, the bourgeoisie developed the predominantly handicraft industry and the exchange of products within feudal society to a relatively high level, when at the end of the fifteenth century the great maritime discoveries opened to it a new and more comprehensive career. Trade beyond the confines of Europe, which had previously been carried on only between Italy and the Levant, was now extended to America and India, and soon surpassed in importance both the mutual exchange between the various European countries and the internal trade within each separate country. American gold and silver flooded Europe and forced its way like a disintegrating element into every fissure, hole and pore of feudal society. Handicraft industry could no longer satisfy the rising demand; in the leading industries of the most advanced countries it was replaced by manufacture.

But this mighty revolution in the economic conditions of life in society was not followed immediately by any corresponding change in its political structure. The state order remained feudal, while society became more and more bourgeois. Trade on a large scale, that is to say, international and, even more, world trade, requires free owners of commodities who are unrestricted in their movements and have equal rights as traders to exchange their commodities on the basis of laws that are equal for them all, at least in each separate place. The transition from handicraft to manufacture presupposes the existence of a number of free workers – free on the one hand from the fetters of the guild and on the other from the means whereby they could themselves utilize their labour power: workers who can contract with their employers for the hire of their labour power, and as parties to the contract have rights equal with his. And finally the equality and equal status of all human labour, because and in so far as it is *human* labour, found its unconscious but clearest expression in the law of value of modern bourgeois economics, according to which the value of a commodity is measured by the socially necessary labour embodied in it. But where economic relations required freedom and equality of rights, the political system opposed them at every step with guild restrictions and special privileges. Local privileges, differential duties, exceptional laws of all kinds affected in trading not only foreigners or people living in the colonies, but often

enough also whole categories of the nationals of each country; the privileges of the guilds everywhere and ever anew formed barriers to the path of development of manufacture. Nowhere was the path open and the chances equal for the bourgeois competitors – and yet this was the first and ever more pressing need.

The demand for liberation from feudal fetters and the establishment of equality of rights by the abolition of feudal inequalities was bound soon to assume wider dimensions from the moment when the economic advance of society first placed it on the order of the day. If it was raised in the interests of industry and trade, it was also necessary to demand the same equality of rights for the great mass of the peasantry who, in every degree of bondage from total serfdom upwards, were compelled to give the greater part of their labour time to their feudal lord without payment and in addition to render innumerable other dues to him and to the state. On the other hand, it was impossible to avoid the demand for the abolition also of feudal privileges, the freedom from taxation of the nobility, the political privileges of the various feudal estates. And as people were no longer living in a world empire such as the Roman Empire had been, but in a system of independent states dealing with each other on an equal footing and at approximately the same degree of bourgeois development, it was a matter of course that the demand for equality should assume a general character reaching out beyond the individual state, that freedom and equality should be proclaimed as *human rights*. And it is significant of the specifically bourgeois character of these human rights that the American Constitution, the first to recognize the rights of man, in the same breath confirmed the slavery of the coloured races in America: class privileges were proscribed, race privileges sanctified.

As is well known, however, from the moment when, like a butterfly from the chrysalis, the bourgeoisie arose out of the burghers of the feudal period, when this 'estate' of the Middle Ages developed into a class of modern society, it was always and inevitably accompanied by its shadow, the proletariat. And in the same way the bourgeois demand for equality was accompanied by the proletarian demand for equality. From the moment when the bourgeois demand for the abolition of class *privileges* was put forward, alongside of it appeared the proletarian demand for the abolition of the *classes themselves* – at first in religious form, basing itself on primitive Christianity, and later drawing support from the bourgeois equalitarian theories themselves. The proletarians took the bourgeoisie at their word: equality must not be merely apparent, must not apply merely to the sphere of the state, but must also be real, must be extended to the social and economic sphere. And especially since the time when the French bourgeoisie, from the Great Revolution on, brought bourgeois equality to the forefront, the French proletariat has answered it blow for blow with the demand for social and economic equality, and equality has become the battle-cry particularly of the French proletariat.

The demand for equality in the mouth of the proletariat has therefore a double meaning. It is either – as was especially the case at the very start, for example in the peasants' war – the spontaneous reaction against the crying social inequalities, against the contrast of rich and poor, the feudal lords and their serfs, surfeit and starvation; as such it is the simple expression of the revolutionary instinct, and finds its justification in that, and indeed only in that. Or, on the other hand, the proletarian demand for equality has arisen as the reaction against the bourgeois demand for equality, drawing more or less correct and more far-reaching demands from this bourgeois demand, and serving as an agitational means in order to rouse the workers against the capitalists on the basis of the capitalists' own assertions; and in this case it stands and falls with bourgeois equality itself. In both cases the real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the *abolition of classes*. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that, of necessity passes into absurdity. We have given examples of this, and shall find enough additional ones later when we come to Herr Dühring's phantasies of the future.

The idea of equality, therefore, both in its bourgeois and in its proletarian form, is itself a historical product, the creation of which required definite historical con-

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ditions which in turn themselves presuppose a long previous historical development. It is therefore anything but an eternal truth. And if today it is taken for granted by the general public – in one sense or another – if, as Marx says, it 'already possesses the fixity of a popular prejudice,' this is not the consequence of its axiomatic truth, but the result of the general diffusion and the continued appropriateness of the ideas of the eighteenth century.

Question 25 How does Engels characterize the early Christian concept of equality?

Question 26 How does Engels distinguish the economic and political aspects of equality in a bourgeois society?

Question 27 What distinguishes the proletarian demand for equality?

Question 28 Does this argument destroy the distinction between numerical and proportionate equality?

J. F. STEPHEN (1829–94) *LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY* (1873)

Sir James Stephen was a lawyer who spent a long time in India conducting a series of bills through the Indian Legislative Council. It was on his journey home to England that he wrote a series of articles later published as a book in 1873 entitled *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*. Although the title and the introductory words of the extract suggest that he was intending to examine the bases of the French revolutionary slogan he concentrated mainly on an examination of the arguments advanced by John Stuart Mill in his essay *On Liberty*, published in 1859. Utilitarians, such as Bentham and James Mill, the father of John Stuart Mill, had argued that freedom of thought and action by the individual were instrumental goods that would lead to the social good. John Stuart Mill in this essay argued on the other hand that political freedom was a good in itself because it was bound up with the high moral character of the individual. The earlier form of utilitarian argument was compatible with substantial inequalities between men, e.g. in wealth, whereas the later form came to be associated with arguments in favour of greater measures of equality e.g., in educational opportunity.

This extract shows how Stephen starts from the belief that it was dangerous to treat equality as *the* basic value and he works his way back to the ancient positions of the desirability of maintaining a balance between equality and inequality based on the nature of man and the social order. His arguments had considerable influence in reinforcing opposition to the movement of popular ideas towards radical democracy and egalitarianism. Before looking at this extract it may help to go back to the essay by John Rawls entitled *Justice as Fairness*, a piece of recommended reading in Units 1–2 Here the utilitarian bases of the most rational conception of justice is explored, and this is contrasted with the contract theory that we have examined in the extract from Rousseau. The two principles of justice advanced in the essay (that of equal right and the difference principle) are closely related to the concepts of numerical and proportionate equality, and the conclusion comes close to the idea of a balance of the two principles. The following extracts are from Stephen (1873) pp. 1–3, 205–6, and 225–9.

The object of this work is to examine the doctrines which are rather hinted at than expressed by the phrase 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'. This phrase has been the motto of more than one Republic. It is indeed something more than a motto. It is the creed of a religion, less definite than any one of the forms of Christianity, which are in part its rivals, in part its antagonists, and in part its associates, but not on that account the less powerful. It is, on the contrary, one of the most penetrating influences of the day. It shows itself now and then in definite forms, of which Positivism is the one best known to our generation, but its special manifestations give no adequate measure of its depth or width. It penetrates other creeds. It has

often transformed Christianity into a system of optimism, which has in some cases retained and in others rejected Christian phraseology. It deeply influences politics and legislation.

It is one of the commonest beliefs of the day that the human race collectively has before it splendid destinies of various kinds, and that the road to them is to be found in the removal of all restraints on human conduct, in the recognition of a substantial equality between all human creatures, and in fraternity or general love. These doctrines are in very many cases held as a religious faith. They are regarded not merely as truths, but as truths for which those who believe in them are ready to do battle, and for the establishment of which they are prepared to sacrifice all merely personal ends.

Such, stated of course in the most general terms, is the religion of which I take 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' to be the creed. I do not believe it.

First, that in the present day even those who use those words most rationally – that is to say, as the names of elements of social life which, like others, have their advantages and disadvantages according to time, place, and circumstance – have a great disposition to exaggerate their advantages and to deny the existence, or at any rate to underrate the importance, of their disadvantages.

Next, that whatever signification be attached to them, these words are ill-adapted to be the creed of a religion, that the things which they denote are not ends in themselves, and that when used collectively the words do not typify, however vaguely, any state of society which a reasonable man ought to regard with enthusiasm or self-devotion.

The second great article of the modern creed which I have undertaken to examine is Equality. It is at once the most emphatic and the least distinct of the three doctrines of which that creed is composed. It may mean that all men should be equally subject to the laws which relate to all. It may mean that law should be impartially administered. It may mean that all the advantages of society, all that men have conquered from nature, should be thrown into one common stock and equally divided amongst them. It may be, and I think it is in a vast number of cases, nothing more than a vague expression of envy on the part of those who have not against those who have, and a vague aspiration towards a state of society in which there should be fewer contrasts than there are at present between one man's lot and another's. All this is so vague and unsatisfactory that it is difficult to reduce it to a form definite enough for discussion. It is impossible to argue against a sentiment otherwise than by repeating commonplaces which are not likely to convince those to whom they are addressed if they require convincing, and which are not needed by those who are convinced already.

I think that if the rights and duties which laws create are to be generally advantageous, they ought to be adapted to the situation of the persons who enjoy or are subject to them. They ought to recognize both substantial equality and substantial inequality, and they should from time to time be so moulded and altered as always to represent fairly well the existing state of society. Government, in a word, ought to fit society as a man's clothes fit him. To establish by law rights and duties which assume that people are equal when they are not is like trying to make clumsy feet look handsome by the help of tight boots. No doubt it may be necessary to legislate in such a manner as to correct the vices of society or to protect it against special dangers or diseases to which it is liable. Law in this case is analogous to surgery, and the rights and duties imposed by it might be compared to the irons which are sometimes contrived for the purpose of supporting a weak limb or keeping it in some particular position. As a rule, however, it is otherwise. Rights and duties should be so moulded as to clothe, protect, and sustain society in the position which it naturally assumes. The proposition, therefore, that justice demands that people should live in society as equals may be translated thus:– 'It is inexpedient that any law should recognize any inequality between human beings.'

This appears to me to involve the assertion, 'There are no inequalities between human beings of sufficient importance to influence the rights and duties which it

is expedient to confer upon them.' This proposition I altogether deny. I say that there are many such differences, some of which are more durable and more widely extended than others, and of which some are so marked and so important that unless human nature is radically changed, we cannot even imagine their removal; and of these the differences of age and sex are the most important.

The difference of age is so distinct a case of inequality that even Mr. Mill does not object to its recognition. He admits, as every one must, that perhaps a third or more of the average term of human life – and that the portion of it in which the strongest, the most durable, and beyond all comparison the most important impressions are made on human beings, the period in which character is formed – must be passed by every one in a state of submission, dependence, and obedience to orders the objects of which are usually most imperfectly understood by the persons who receive them. Indeed, as I have already pointed out, Mr. Mill is disposed rather to exaggerate than to underrate the influence of education and the powers of educators. Is not this a clear case of inequality of the strongest kind, and does it not at all events afford a most instructive precedent in favour of the recognition by law of a marked natural distinction? If children were regarded by law as the equals of adults, the result would be something infinitely worse than barbarism. It would involve a degree of cruelty to the young which can hardly be realized even in imagination. The proceeding, in short, would be so utterly monstrous and irrational that I suppose it never entered into the head of the wildest zealot for equality to propose it.

Upon the practical question all are agreed; but consider the consequences which it involves. It involves the consequence that, so far from being 'unfortunate necessities,' command and obedience stand at the very entrance to life, and preside over the most important part of it. It involves the consequence that the exertion of power and constraint is so important and so indispensable in the greatest of all matters, that it is a less evil to invest with it every head of a family indiscriminately, however unfit he may be to exercise it, than to fail to provide for its exercise. It involves the consequence that by mere lapse of time and by following the promptings of passion men acquire over others a position of superiority and of inequality which all nations and ages, the most cultivated as well as the rudest, have done their best to surround with every association of awe and reverence.

Now, if society and government ought to recognize the inequality of age as the foundation of an inequality of rights of this importance, it appears to me at least equally clear that they ought to recognize the inequality of sex for the same purpose, if it is a real inequality. Is it one? There are some propositions which it is difficult to prove, because they are so plain, and this is one of them. The physical differences between the two sexes affect every part of the human body, from the hair of the head to the soles of the feet, from the size and density of the bones to the texture of the brain and the character of the nervous system. Ingenious people may argue about anything, and Mr. Mill does say a great number of things about women which, as I have already observed, I will not discuss; but all the talk in the world will never shake the proposition that men are stronger than women in every shape. They have greater muscular and nervous force, greater intellectual force, greater vigour of character. This general truth, which has been observed under all sorts of circumstances and in every age and country, has also in every age and country led to a division of labour between men and women, the general outline of which is as familiar and as universal as the general outline of the differences between them. These are the facts, and the question is whether the law and public opinion ought to recognize this difference? How it ought to recognize it, what difference it ought to make between men and women as such, is quite another question.

The first point to consider is whether it ought to treat them as equals, although, as I have shown, they are not equals, because men are the stronger. I will take one or two illustrations. Men, no one denies, may, and in some cases ought to be liable to compulsory military service. No one, I suppose, would hesitate to admit, that if we were engaged in a great war it might become necessary, or that

if necessary it would be right, to have a conscription both for the land and for the sea service. Ought men and women to be subject to it indiscriminately? If anyone says that they ought, I have no more to say, except that he has got into the region at which argument is useless. But if it is admitted that this ought not to be done, an inequality of treatment founded on a radical inequality between the two sexes is admitted, and if this admission is once made, where are you to draw the line?

Question 29 How does Stephen relate together belief, religious creed and rational argument?

Question 30 Distinguish those parts of Stephen's arguments which are based on expediency, the nature of things and reason.

Question 31 Is Stephen's main attack on the supporters of equality based on the premises on which their arguments rest or on the consequences of their arguments?

Question 32 Do you accept that the distinctions of age and sex are of the same force or are they substantially different in kind?

Question 33 What features of the passage given justify the classification of Stephen as a conservative?

F. NIETZSCHE (1844–1900) *THE ANTI-CHRIST* (1888)

One of the sharpest critics of the levelling tendencies associated with the idea of equality at the end of the nineteenth century was Nietzsche. His ideas both reflected and nourished the conservative reaction to increasing democracy. He characterized the development of equality as 'this brutalizing of man into a pygmy with equal rights and claims'. In his best known work *Thus Spake Zarathustra* he condemned the attacks on the aristocracy not because he was a defender of it but because he believed in inequality in the form of the overman, the defender of a higher culture. The aristocracy had proved to be incapable of defending it. He said it 'is indeed better to live among hermits and goatherds than among our gilded, false, painted mob – even if they call themselves "good society", even if they call themselves "nobility".' Christianity had marked the triumph of the morality of the slaves against the pagans in terms of the ultimate ends. The French revolution dragged down all culture to the level of immediate happiness along with privilege and wealth. This threat to culture could only be countered by corrosive criticism and thereby destroyed rather than by the erection of a new political apparatus.

The extract that follows is taken from *Nietzsche*, 1911 edition pp. 216–220. The reference to Manu is to the ancestor of the world according to Hindu mythology.

The unholiness of Christian means is caught *in flagranti*, if only the end aspired to by Christianity be compared with that of the Law-Book of Manu; if only these two utterly opposed aims be put under a strong light. The critic of Christianity simply cannot avoid making Christianity *contemptible*. – A Law-Book like that of Manu comes into being like every good law-book: it epitomizes the experience, the precautionary measures, and the experimental morality of long ages, it settles things definitely, it no longer creates. The prerequisite for a codification of this kind, is the recognition of the fact that the means which procure authority for a *truth* to which it has cost both time and great pains to attain, are fundamentally different from those with which that same truth would be proved. A law-book never relates the utility, the reasons, the preliminary casuistry, of a law: for it would be precisely in this way that it would forfeit its imperative tone, the 'thou shalt,' the first condition of its being obeyed. The problem lies exactly in this. – At a certain stage in the development of a people, the most far-seeing class within it – that is to say, the class that sees farthest backwards and forwards), declares the experience of how its fellow-creatures ought to live – *i.e. can* live – to be finally settled. Its object is, to

reap as rich and as complete a harvest as possible, in return for the ages of experiment and *terrible* experience it has traversed. Consequently, that which has to be avoided, above all, is any further experimentation, the continuation of the state when values are still fluid, the testing, choosing, and criticizing of values *ad infinitum*. Against all this a double wall is built up: in the first place, *Revelation*, which is the assumption that the rationale of every law is not human in its origin, that it was not sought and found after ages of error, but that it is divine in its origin, completely and utterly without a history, a gift, a miracle, a mere communication. . . . And secondly, *tradition*, which is the assumption that the law has obtained since the most primeval times, that it is impious and a crime against one's ancestors to attempt to doubt it. The authority of law is established on the principles: God *gave* it, the ancestors *lived* it. – The superior reason of such a procedure lies in the intention to draw consciousness off step by step from that mode of life which has been recognized as correct (*i.e.*, *proved* after enormous and carefully examined experience), so that perfect automatism of the instincts may be attained, – this being the only possible basis of all mastery of every kind of perfection in the Art of Life. To draw up a lawbook like Manu's, is tantamount to granting a people mastership for the future, perfection for the future, – the right to aspire to the highest Art of Life. *To that end it must be made unconscious*: this is the object of every holy lie. – *The order of castes*, the highest, the dominating law, is only the sanction of a *natural order*, of a natural legislation of the first rank, over which no arbitrary innovation, no 'modern idea' has any power. Every healthy society falls into three distinct types, which reciprocally condition one another and which gravitate differently in the physiological sense; and each of these has its own hygiene, its own sphere of work, its own special feeling of perfection, and its own mastership. It is Nature, not Manu, that separates from the rest, those individuals preponderating in intellectual power, those excelling in muscular strength and temperament, and the third class which is distinguished neither in one way nor the other, the mediocre, – the latter as the greatest number, the former as the *élite*. The superior caste – I call them the *fewest*, – has, as the perfect caste, the privileges of the fewest: it devolves upon them to represent happiness, beauty and goodness on earth. Only the most intellectual men have the right to beauty, to the beautiful: only in them is goodness not weakness. *Pulchrum est paucorum hominum*: goodness is a privilege. On the other hand there is nothing which they should be more strictly forbidden than repulsive manners or a pessimistic look, a look that makes everything *seem ugly*, – or even indignation at the general aspect of things. Indignation is the privilege of the Chandala, and so is pessimism, '*The world is perfect*' – that is what the instinct of the most intellectual says, the yea-saying instinct; 'imperfection, every kind of *inferiority* to us, distance, the pathos of distance, even the Chandala belongs to this perfection.' The most intellectual men, as the *strongest* find their happiness where others meet with their ruin: in the labyrinth, in hardness towards themselves and others, in endeavour; their delight is self-mastery: with them asceticism becomes a second nature, a need, an instinct. They regard a difficult task as their privilege; to play with burdens which crush the fellows is to them a *recreation*. . . . Knowledge, a form of asceticism. – They are the most honourable kind of men: but that does not prevent them from being the most cheerful and most gracious. They rule, not because they will, but because they *are*; they are not at liberty to take a second place. – The second in rank are the guardians of the law, the custodians of order and of security, the noble warriors, the king, above all, as the highest formula of the warrior, the judge, and keeper of the law. The second in rank are the executive of the most intellectual, the nearest to them in duty, relieving them of all that is *coarse* in the work of ruling, – their retinue, their right hand, their best disciples. In all this, I repeat, there is nothing arbitrary, nothing 'artificial,' that which is *otherwise* is artificial, – by that which is otherwise, nature is put to shame. . . . The order of castes, and the order of rank merely formulates the supreme law of life itself; the differentiation of the three types is necessary for the maintenance of society, and for enabling higher and highest types to be reared, – the *inequality* of rights is the only condition of there being rights at all. – A right is a privilege. And in his way, each has his privilege. Let us not underestimate the privileges of the *mediocre*. Life always gets harder towards the summit, – the cold increases, responsibility increases. A high civilization

is a pyramid: it can stand only upon a broad base, its first prerequisite is a strongly and soundly consolidated mediocrity. Handicraft, commerce, agriculture, science, the greater part of art, – in a word, the whole range of professional and business callings, is compatible only with mediocre ability and ambition; such pursuits would be out of place among exceptions, the instinct pertaining thereto would oppose not only aristocracy but anarchy as well. The fact that one is publicly useful, a wheel, a function, presupposes a certain natural destiny: it is not *society*, but the only kind of *happiness* of which the great majority are capable, that makes them intelligent machines. For the mediocre it is a joy to be mediocre; in them mastery in one thing, a speciality, is a natural instinct. It would be absolutely unworthy of a profound thinker to see any objection in mediocrity *per se*. For in itself it is the first essential condition under which exceptions are possible; a high culture is determined by it. When the exceptional man treats the mediocre with more tender care than he does himself or his equals, this is not mere courtesy of heart on his part – but simply his *duty*. . . . Whom do I hate most among the rabble of the present day? The socialistic rabble, the Chandala apostles, who undermine the working man's instinct, his happiness and his feeling of contentedness with his insignificant existence, – who make him envious, and who teach him revenge. . . . The wrong never lies in unequal rights; it lies in the claim to equal rights. What is *bad*? But I have already replied to this: Everything that proceeds from weakness, envy and *revenge*. – The anarchist and the Christian are offspring of the same womb. . . .

Question 34 What importance does Nietzsche attach to revelation and tradition?

Question 35 What are the three types into which every healthy society naturally falls according to Nietzsche?

Question 36 What is the special function of the superior caste?

Question 37 How does Nietzsche characterize a civilization?

Question 38 What is Nietzsche's ultimate objection to equality?

What evidence from the modern world can you produce to support or reject the view that 'life always gets harder towards the summit'? Are there significant differences in this respect between the experience of the developed and the developing nations? (This is another of the open questions for which no answer is provided.)

R. H. TAWNEY (1880–1962) *EQUALITY* (1931)

In the 1952 edition of these essays Tawney wrote 'The Churches should assert that class privilege, and the gross inequalities of wealth on which it rests, are not only a hideously uncivilized business, but an odious outrage on the Image of God'.

He had a profound belief in the ethical values of the ordinary man 'who is worth, except to his modest self, nine-tenths of the gentilities, notabilities, intellectual, cultural and ethical eminences put together'. He was at school and university with Archbishop Temple and his influences spread far outside the ranks of the Labour Party for whom he stood four times as a candidate. From 1905 he was one of the most active influences on the Workers' Educational Association and as Professor of Economic History in the University of London he achieved world renown. He shared many of the views of Matthew Arnold, whose influential essay on Equality was published the year of Tawney's birth. Arnold served for some time as a school inspector and Tawney shared with him his faith in education as a force to raise all round cultural standards.

Arnold had written 'On the one side, in fact, inequality harms by pampering; on the other, by vulgarizing and depressing'. It was the civilized aspect of equality that Tawney emphasizes, and popularized.

You will have already read Chapter I of Tawney for Units 1–2 and you may, if you wish, read it again, along with the first thirty pages of Chapter II before considering the following questions.

Question 39 What two meanings of equality does Tawney distinguish?

Question 40 What are the two sources of inequality that Tawney distinguishes?

Question 41 If 'different individuals require different types of provision', is this an argument for numerical or proportionate equality?

Question 42 What features did Tawney consider characterized a society that gave a high value to equality?

CONCLUSION

At the start of this unit we gave you a passage written by a modern social philosopher and asked you to go back to it at the end of the exercise to test how far you had been able to develop a skill in handling this kind of argument. From the discussion of the many metaphysical propositions about inequality provided in the extracts you should have been able to find some that show the relevance of the work of the philosopher to the issues dealt with in the social sciences.

We have examined the arguments of a number of social philosophers and seen how there are continuities in these arguments. In particular we have traced the recurrence of the ideas of numerical and proportionate equality. We have seen how in the nineteenth century there was a gradual acceptance of numerical equality in the extension of the franchise. The expansion of facilities for education during the century was also substantially based on the idea of proportionate equality in the sense of equality of opportunity. The case for numerical equality has been extended in this century to religion, race, colour and sex.

Attention has been drawn in the questions posed to the application of arguments, ideas and concepts used by past writers to the current world. It must appear in the course of trying to do this that the belief systems at present subscribed to and advocated with reference to inequality are lacking in much of the passion associated with them in the past.

A modern philosopher can therefore rightly approach his task of looking at arguments about inequality with much greater coolness than previously was the case. Take for example this passage:

> The principle of Equality is an essential ingredient of the most enduring and articulate political tradition to come out of European culture; that of Liberalism. 'Liberalism', as one of its finest historians has written, 'regarded as a universal and widespread historical consciousness, implies not only the feeling of liberty but the idea of equality'. But like so much of that tradition, this principle has become so encrusted, so over-grown with particular interpretations, all comprehensible enough in the light of the particular historical conditions that occasioned them but, from an abstract point of view, partial and arbitrary, that it is difficult to see it clearly, as it is. Yet if we are to subscribe to it, or to reject it, or indeed to adopt any attitude towards it – and surely we all must – it is necessary to be clear about certain challenging questions that arise in connexion with it: what it means, how it can be justified, and in what relations it stands to other principles with which it is ordinarily associated.
>
> It would seem that in the course of history two quite distinct political principles have been advanced of which both can make a good claim to be regarded as the principle of Equality. It is not easy to bring out the differences between them or indeed to express the principles themselves, by means of any general formulation.

> Accordingly I shall consider the principles through the medium of particular applications of them. For the sake of illustration I shall take the sphere of Property – a sphere in which much has been heard of them. The two principles are there exemplified by the two following theses:
>
> 1 Every man has a right to equal property.
>
> 2 Every man has an equal right to property.
>
> (Wollheim, 1956, pp. 281–2).

By now you should be able immediately to recognize that these are particular formulations of the old distinction we have met so many times between numerical and proportionate equality. And you will have realized that there is still a lot of mileage left in the possible applications of these concepts. A belief in equality can be seen therefore not necessarily to involve a belief in egalitarianism as an ideology. When you come to look at arguments in the following units about personal equality, and equality of wealth and income, the exercises you have done in this unit should have equipped you to pick out the central concepts involved and see how they are related together. The following key questions will help you to check the development of your skill so far.

KEY QUESTIONS

Question 43 What are the main tasks of philosophers and how do they attempt to perform them?

Question 44 What distinguishes the area of concern of the political philosopher from that of the social scientist and how are they related?

Question 45 Why do philosophers devote attention to belief systems and how far are they justified in so doing?

Question 46 What did the ancient and mediaeval philosophers contribute to the development of ideas about inequality?

Question 47 Do socialist and liberal approaches to political philosophy differ in respect of the belief systems they mainly examine and/or in the ways in which they examine them?

Question 48 Show by reference to the writings of political philosophers given in the extracts how the concepts of inequality or equality have been most usefully critically examined or elucidated?

Question 49 What distinct concepts of equality or inequality given in the extracts can be most usefully applied to a critical examination of present-day belief systems?

Question 50 How can the major shifts in nineteenth century attitudes to inequality be most clearly characterized?

Question 51 What particular attitudes to inequality or equality at present most deserve the attention of political philosophers?

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OUTLINE ANSWERS

Answer 1 An ideological statement is one based on an accepted value or system of values, considered to be self-evident and therefore not requiring justification. If nature is accepted as an unquestionable good, and then all men are held to be unequal in natural endowments, it follows that men should be (or ought to be) treated unequally. The initial premise cannot be disputed, although one may always say 'I do not believe that' and then substitute for it another belief. The second premise about the inequality of human endowments may always be examined in the light of available evidence. One may also challenge the logical coherence of the argument when there are several stages in it. It is the presence of the ideological element in the premise that made Tawney, for example, argue that ideological statements are false because they distort reality.

A scientific statement starts with an hypothesis or theory which is in principle open to refutation either by lack of evidence to support it or by lack of logical coherence in the argument. Scientific statements tend therefore to be arguments about particular problems or disciplines (sometimes called middle-range theories) whereas philosophical statements tend to be generalizations about reality (sometimes called over-arching theories).

Answer 2 A social scientist lives in an environment of social discourse that is surcharged with beliefs and values. It is not simply that he cannot escape from sharing some or all of these in his own thoughts but also that he is interested in what part these beliefs and values play in social relations. Ideologies are therefore, for both these reasons, a quarry of ideas and of problems for the social scientist.

Answer 3 How we think about the world is the result of our upbringing, education and experience of our social relations which leads us to subscribe to a set of beliefs or values which more or less reflects our class position. Our actions tend to flow from these beliefs and values. The individual may have relatively minor differences of correlation between belief and action which reflect his individuality.

Answer 4 Ireton rejects natural right as a premise which had been used to justify the argument that every inhabitant should have an equal voice in the election of representatives. He poses against *natural* right the concept of *civil* right, arising from traditional practice and expressed in the constitution, whereby those who owned little or no property were excluded from the suffrage.

Rainborough argues against inequality of *civil* right as being contrary to the will of God and nature.

Ireton tries to make the distinction between equality of treatment (one man one vote) and the universal application of this (every man to have one vote). He bases the right to vote on interest (ownership of property). The difference between them lies in the different ideological premises from which they proceed which makes Rainborough appear to be the more egalitarian although he stops short of an absolute principle of equality.

Answer 5 Ireton argues that political right should reflect social right, which in turn must be based on what is necessary to maintain the economic system. Rainborough argues for the sovereign political right to secure some greater measure of social justice. The differences arise from differences in values to which they subscribe.

Answer 6 Rainborough argues against the existing law that gave a lord the right to choose 20 representatives, a gentleman only two and a poor man none. A right to vote based on property (because property is unequally distributed) gives proportionate equality but Rainborough is arguing for an equal distribution of the franchise in terms of numerical equality.

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Answer 7 Ireton confesses that his main argument rests on what he calls his 'eye for property'. He rejects the feudal concept of rank and accepts an equal right of all property owners. In this sense he may be said to be in favour of a property-owning democracy.

Answer 8 The question raises the point that an argument for equality in some respect can be made to look unacceptable if it is extended to cases outside a given category, i.e. extending the vote to foreigners on grounds of equality comes close to extending it to dogs.

Answer 9 Rousseau argues that the establishment of industry, in which 'the joint labour of several hands' arose, property was developed and inequalities of reward were introduced, destroyed the happy state of equality that prevailed in civil society of pre-industrial times.

Answer 10 Rousseau argues that inequalities of talent only become significant in an industrialized society when the human being becomes corrupted into the exploitation of his talent to achieve wealth at the cost of the less talented who then lives in relative squalor. There is 'hardly any inequality in the state of nature'. What there is does not disturb its harmony. When inequality is made the basis of competitive drive in a society it causes conflict.

Answer 11 Rousseau argues that an increasing thirst for material wealth created the demand for industry and accelerated the process of growing inequality and corruption. He was one of the earliest to see the force of a concept of an accelerating process of inequality.

Answer 12 Inheritance, Rousseau argues, increased the accumulation of land into fewer and fewer hands making it possible for one man to 'aggrandize himself only at the expense of another'.

Answer 13 Rousseau sketches in some features of the process leading towards a growing social inequality. The more sophisticated means available in modern society to accumulate and hold wealth, compared with those developed in the eighteenth century, tends to make Rousseau's argument sound rather simple.

Answer 14 The features distinguished by Rousseau in his society applied to simple, small-scale industrial and agricultural activities. Today greater degrees of divisions of labour and of classes than existed in Rousseau's day make these features appear to the underprivileged in present day society to be true.

Answer 15 Rousseau uses the idea of exploitation in a very simple sense arising out of the existence of moral inequality which is not proportionate to physical inequality.

Answer 16 Tocqueville saw that the strength of the British aristocracy lay in its acceptance of recruits from the wealthy in trade and industry. He saw its weakness and decline as a class with the growth of the class of poor people who were increasingly aware that they stood little chance of themselves becoming aristocrats, or of sharing their power, but much more chance of acquiring their own political power by democracy.

Answer 17 Tocqueville thought that the aristocracy in Britain could check the threat to its political power from the lower classes by improving the well-being of the latter, and then forming an alliance with them to share that power.

Answer 18 Tocqueville rejects the idea that there is an absolute truth or good in human affairs, but advances a relative truth or good that the maintenance of a changing balance between the power of the aristocracy and that of the democracy will avoid violence and rapid change (which are relative evils).

Answer 19 Tocqueville argues that the virtue of the situation in England was that members of the lower classes were free to rise to positions of wealth and power and were then accepted as social equals by the aristocracy. Proportionate equality meant freedom. Those who now argue against high rates of income tax, which reduce people to a much greater measure of numerical equality of wealth, do so on similar grounds. They argue that it denies the right of a man to be free to exercise his talent in order to raise himself up the ladder to wealth.

Answer 20 Mill argues that the ideas of justice or policy which prevail in a community (the public ideology) will decide whether wealth is in principle divided with complete equality (numerical equality) or according to need or desert of individuals (proportionate equality, justified by some principle, or supposed principle of justice or social expediency). He distinguishes from the latter existing inequalities, most of which are held to be accidental.

Answer 21 Mill's account of the way in which the working class lose their feelings of social deference rests on their social experience and capacity to reason. The latter may be criticized as an exaggerated factor. Later experience suggests that control over the means of communication of ideas and information by the capitalists could limit the awareness of equality.

Answer 22 Mill argues that the working classes were becoming more widely able to read and to reason. They were being brought together in factories and formed common organizations to exercise the vote to secure for themselves a share in government. Education was increasingly reducing the respect the working classes had for the authority and prestige of their superiors (a qualitative inequality). In place of ignorance and social deference there was a growing good sense and respect for superiority of intellect and knowledge (with reward based on the idea of proportionate equality).

Answer 23 In the concluding section of the passage Mill poses the alternative paths of development for society as he sees them. Either it will follow a course of reform leading to a partnership between capitalists and workers (something like the modern liberal concepts of co-partnership in industry) or the association of workers taking power (some form of socialism).

Answer 24 Good sense suggests a substantial element of moral judgement. The division of the educational system into grammar, technical and secondary modern schools was justified on the grounds that it cultivated the appropriate form of good sense for the working classes.

Answer 25 Engels characterizes the Christian concept of equality as one based on the idea of all men having been born equal in original sin. They have this common quality that makes them equal. The ideological basis for this view is to be found in the belief systems subscribed to by slaves and the oppressed.

Answer 26 Engels argues that the bourgeoisie, originally a subordinate feudal estate, achieves social and economic dominance through the growth in trade and industry. Their claim for social equality with the aristocracy (the removal of a qualitative inequality or lower status) was achieved before they were able to mount a

claim, or realize it, for political equality. The bourgeois order of society then necessitates the recognition (in the law of value) of the equality of labour and the removal of all other status distinctions characteristic of social inequality. Equality had reached the form of a popular prejudice.

Answer 27 The working class claim for equality began as a reaction against hurtful inequalities between serf and lord or poor and rich. It then became a reinforcement of the bourgeois claim for equality and, as the latter became muted, it took the form of an agitation for the demand by the workers for the full range of bourgeois rights for themselves. The idea of equality has a variety of historical forms.

Answer 28 The conclusion of the argument is that the working class claim for equality formed part of their demand for the elimination of classes. The latter would lead to the establishment of a socialist society in which distribution would be decided 'according to the contribution made by a worker in the work he did'. This reflected the values of a socialist society. A communist society would enjoy an abundance of wealth and the principle of distribution for this would be according to need. What mattered in this shift of meaning of equality over time was not to be found in distinctions between numerical or proportionate equality, in terms of quantitative equality, but in the ideological content put into the concept of equality.

Answer 29 Stephen starts his argument by establishing that the doctrine of equality rests on a belief system or faith, a kind of optimistic Christianity, which gave it the form of a creed or, alternatively, a social theory of Positivism. It rests at bottom on the vague sentiment of envy expressed by those who *have not* against those who have.

Answer 30 Reason, on the other hand, suggests that the law should reflect the natural order of society (i.e. its existing state) providing both substantial equality and substantial inequality.

Answer 31 Stephen says at first the arguments for equality are vague and therefore difficult to refute. He then examines the assertion that 'there are no inequalities between human beings of sufficient importance to influence the rights and duties which it is expedient to confer on them'. He cites inequalities of age and sex as examples. His argument is that there are quantitative differences between the young and the old that may be difficult to quantify exactly but which give rise to different status of authority and obedience. If one removes these distinctions then one dissolves society into disorder. Thus both the premises of the argument and its consequences are unacceptable. One's ideological standpoint may lead one therefore to reject the premises on which an argument rests, the mode of its reasoning, or the conclusions it reaches by the simple form of rejection involved in the statement that 'I do not believe it'.

Answer 32 Every society will put into the formal relations between old and young, men and women, content that reflects the values of that society. Stephen is trying to maintain the values of his society, and the treatment of women as though they were children which was part of the Victorian upper class creed (in spite of the rejection of it by people like Mill).

Answer 33 Stephen's insistence on the sanctity of the existing society 'in the position which it naturally assumes' and the awe and reverence associated with high status as a universal truth are examples of a conservative belief system and mode of thought.

Answer 34 The protection of the ideology of the dominant class in a society is achieved by the erection of two barriers:

(a) one called revelation which gives to the law an unchallengeable divine authority, and

(b) the other called tradition whereby the law has been proved to be sound by long experience.

Answer 35 Nietzsche distinguishes three natural divisions of society (which he also calls the natural order or order of castes):

(a) the superior caste; the fewest, the elite, the intellectual power, the strongest, they rule not because they will but because they are superior;

(b) the executive: the guardians of the law, the custodians of order and security, who do the 'coarse' work of ruling, which gives them their functional status, and

(c) the mediocre; the many, the base of the pyramid of society, those who work in commerce, agriculture, science and the greater part of art, who are mediocre both in ability and ambition.

Answer 36 The special function of the superior caste is to represent happiness, beauty and goodness on earth, by which he means to maintain the social culture. They are the custodians of the prevailing values of the society.

Answer 37 A civilization for Nietzsche is the characteristic of a society organized in a hierarchy, and the higher a superior caste stands above the mass mediocrity, the higher the civilization.

Answer 38 Nietzsche detests weakness, envy and especially revenge, the characteristic source of claims for equal rights expressed by anarchists and Christians alike. These claims, if they were successful, would destroy culture.

Answer 39 Tawney distinguishes two meanings of equality:

(a) the factual statement that all men are on the whole similar in their natural endowments, and

(b) the ethical statement that although they differ profoundly in capacity, they are entitled as human beings to equal treatment, and society will prosper best if they are enabled equally to make the best of their powers.

He regards the first meaning as untenable.

Answer 40 Tawney distinguishes inequality of:

(a) personal gifts, natural to the individual, and

(b) social and economic environment, which is a product of social organization.

Answer 41 Differential treatment of different individuals by society may mean arbitrary treatment (leading to a wild inequality); equal treatment within categories but unequal between categories; or treatment according to need, merit or status (proportionate equality). It is really an argument for a mixture of both concepts.

Answer 42 Tawney argues that a society which values equality will recognize the importance of differences of quality between *individuals* but reject the attachment of importance to economic and social differences to different *groups*. The division of society into castes or classes is bad; the reward of individual difference is good. Numerical equality applies to groups whereas proportionate equality applies to individuals.

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Answer 43 Philosophers all engage in thought and argument about the great common problems of human existence. They explore the premises on which the general theories about these problems rest and the logical structure of the theories. They deal in ideas and arguments, most of which they inherit from previously existing philosophies, but inevitably they more or less share the values of the society in which they live.

Answer 44 The social scientist is normally a specialist in some branch of social problems and concerned with theories specially related to them. In the main he tries to avoid being involved in arguments about values. The political philosopher is, as a philosopher, interested in the methodology of the social scientists. He is also concerned with the ideological foundations on which theories are advanced by them. As a *political* philosopher he is of course most concerned with the significance of the application by governments of theories (formulated by social scientists) to deal with social problems.

Answer 45 Philosophers inherit theories and philosophical generalizations from the past that contain value judgements many of which they do not share. They address themselves to an audience that wishes them to articulate and justify the values of their society. Philosophers are therefore obliged to examine past ideas and theories and to reject them or revise them in such a way as to meet the needs of their own society for ideas and general theories.

Answer 46 Ancient, and later, mediaeval philosophers discussed equality in relation to nature and law (or justice). Greek and Roman civilizations were built on social foundations of slavery whereby slaves and captive peoples were denied any considerations as citizens. The civil society was mainly oligarchic and there was a constant fear of the threat to its existence by democratic revolt. Disorder was to be avoided and it followed that one either rejected the democratic claim to equality or attempted to meet it in part. The concepts of numerical and proportionate equality, especially when associated together in a common policy were considered to be likely to satisfy both an elite and the mass of the people.

Answer 47 Liberal political thought proceeds from the individual and his right to free development in society. Equality is associated with freedom and with partial and gradual reform of society which will maximize freedom. Great emphasis is placed on reason as an equal gift to all men and the guarantee of a peaceful order.

Socialists tended increasingly to look to major reforms of society in order to produce a perfect community in which men would be uniformly equal and in which the collective rather than the individual was the guarantee of the good life. Because of the different bases of values and beliefs liberals and socialists have tended to employ natural law, nature, natural right, contract, utility, and expediency forms of argument about equality and inequality with very different results.

Answer 48 The arguments advanced by Tawney, for example, show first of all the ideological foundations on which arguments about inequality rest. He points to some of the connections between equality and freedom. He analyses different meanings attached to equality, refines the distinction between numerical and proportionate equality, and shows how the recognition of personal inequalities or ability can be combined with the minimum of economic and social differences between groups.

Answer 49 The claims for sexual equality that are advanced from, e.g. the disadvantaged woman who cannot get a mortgage to buy a house, help to expose the values dominant in a society that extends class inequality to sex. The concept of equality as a claim for more equal treatment serves to expose to criticism the unacceptability of one or more of the existing set of inequalities.

Answer 50 During the nineteenth century the concept of inequality moved from one based on status or rank in society to one based on individual merit measured in terms of wealth, social function, or contractual relations (such as master and servant). It became closely associated with individualism, democracy and freedom. Following the great currency given to equality by the French revolutionary slogans it continued to enjoy prominence in ideological arguments advanced with great passion. A new lease of life for the claim for individual equality of rights was provoked when socialist and collectivist arguments for equality were advanced by the underprivileged against the inequality arising from superior rights and rewards of the better off. With the growth of mass political parties, however, the ideological battles about inequality were fought out more in terms of programme and doctrine rather than in terms of general theory and philosophy. Intellectuals tended to adopt an aloof tone towards the concept and different formulations of it because they could no longer see a dominant set of values in which it could feature. Applications of the concept to property became increasingly technical to the point where philosophers felt they were no longer interested.

Answer 51 The work that social scientists have done in relation to racial, sexual and political inequality within given societies, and in comparative studies, tending to show how different social systems are converging closer to each others in respect of inequality has opened up new fields of general theory into which philosophical inquiry appears to be needed.

UNIT 4
Personal Inequality as an Ideological Concept

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One principal aim of the present unit is the examination of the concept of personal inequality and its value in interpreting social patterns of inequality.

Two different views on personal inequality *vis-à-vis* social inequality have already been expressed in Units 1–2. In your reading of Tawney (Chapter 1) you may recall his quotation of the words of the industrialist Sir Herbert Austin: 'cease teaching that all men are equal and entitled to an equal share of the common wealth, . . . enrich the men who make sacrifices justifying enrichment, . . . leave the others in their contentment, rather than try to mould material that was never intended to withstand the fires of refinement.' (Tawney 1971, p 45). Two assumptions are made in this passage. The first is that personal differences in some kind of undefined general capability are innately given. The second is that there is some reason to differentially reward the possession of this 'undefined general capacity' when it exists to differing extents.

Such assumptions were later elaborated into the functionalist view of society, outlined briefly in Units 1–2 (section 3.2). This view, stated briefly, argues that it is necessary to differentially reward certain occupational categories not only because they are vital to the wellbeing of society but because they contain individuals from a rare pool of natural talent who have to be persuaded to enter a long and arduous professional training.

The opposed view was expressed by Tawney, when he stated that:

> Few men have been more sensitive than Mill to the importance of encouraging the widest possible diversities of mind and taste; . . . in urging that social policy should be directed to increasing equality he did not intend to convey that it should suppress varieties of individual genetics and character, but that it was only in a society marked by a large measure of economic equality that such varieties were likely to find their full expression and due need of appreciation.
>
> (Tawney 1964, p 48)

One aspect of Tawney's argument is the separation of the idea of individual difference from that of personal inequality, 'To recognise a specific difference . . . (in natural endowment) . . . is one thing; to pass a general judgement of superiority or inferiority, still more to favour the first and neglect the second, is quite another.'

It is of some interest to note that despite the opposition of views expressed by the functionalists and those expressed by Tawney and others, there was general agreement that individual differences in 'natural talent' do exist.

In contradistinction to views which accept such inborn differences, are those which are voiced as part of the ideology of post-war liberalism. It has been held by some that individual differences are necessarily derived from, or determined by, the economic and general cultural circumstances to which the growing generation are exposed. In its extreme form this argument leads to the conclusion that, given a suitable structure to society, personal inequalities would cease to exist but so too would the individual differences on which those inequalities were based. In these terms individual differences are a kind of epiphenomenon, an artifact produced by the subjection of individuals to forms of inequality imposed by present-day society.

Arguments concerning the 'nature of society' have thus drawn on, or explicitly rejected, the notion of 'natural endowment'. It would seem to be important to examine such evidence as exists on this issue.

A second aim of this unit is to examine the concept of innate or natural endowment in order to demonstrate how an apparently scientific concept – such as intelligence – has been taken up as an important part of particular kinds of political ideology, and

used to justify particular kinds of government policy which themselves influence the social pattern of inequalities in society.

In Units 1–2 (section 2) various definitions of ideology were given. Some emphasize ideology as a concept related to the distortion or falsification of knowledge. Others emphasize the coherence of values, concepts and political objectives, which form the world-view of any particular grouping in society. In either case an antithesis is set up between the world as it is perceived, and the world as it really is.

One problem with the notion of ideology as a way of organizing and viewing the world is the possibility that there can be no way that any individual can know what the world 'out there' is really like. Following this line of argument it might be argued that there can be no way in which an ideology can be assessed against some valid external criterion, and that ideologies must simply conflict, and attract support where they can.

A common answer to such a line of argument is to appeal to the neutrality of science as the final arbiter of the truth. Science, or social science, it is argued, allows a value-free assessment of the real world. Scientists do make value judgements, of course, and you have been warned of this in the Introduction to Section I. However, the *procedures* of science provide, if not an elimination of bias and value-laden decisions, at least some form of check on 'gross distortions' of the truth. Empirical investigation in science involves (in an ideal world) an attempt to establish the generality of assertions both by insisting that results are repeatable at different times, and verifiable by other scientists. In this respect science is better, for example, than a journalistic report of hearsay evidence.

Although the procedures of science are more neutral in arriving at reliable data than other procedures, it should not be forgotten that in some respects they may be less detached. In particular you should ask yourself why it is that scientists choose to study certain problems, use certain techniques, and make certain initial assumptions. In the present unit it is my aim to illustrate the relationship between empirical evidence and value judgement by examining the notion of innate or natural endowment, and to discuss the nature of such a concept, its roots in the Darwinian era, and its refinement in recent decades.

From its inception the idea of innate intelligence has been treated both as a scientific fact and as an ideological axiom. To some the assumption of differences in natural endowment is seen as an entirely necessary justification for any ideology of élites. The very question of individual differences and their origin is then seen as a spurious question diverting attention from the economic base on which all social patterns of inequality *ought* to be explained. To others the failure to assimilate the empirical evidence for a largely hereditary origin of intelligence is yet another example of the role of ideology in blinding people to unpalatable truths. This kind of debate is particularly relevant at the present time and features in discussion of social policy relating to the fields of racial integration, education and income inequality.

In order to achieve the two principal aims of this unit I shall adopt the stratagem of pursuing a single topic – that of intelligence testing – in some depth. But what I have to say may be generalizable to other issues concerned with differences in natural endowment, such as the supposed biological sexual differences which underlie the all too apparent sexual inequalities, or the supposed innate differences in aggressiveness that distinguish leaders from followers in our society. Your objectives should therefore be somewhat wider than the issue of 'intelligence testing' and should come closer to the issue of 'personal inequality as an ideological concept', as the title for the unit suggests. The objectives for this unit are therefore posed as a series of broad key questions which you should be able to answer after reading this, the concluding unit of the introductory block:

1 To what extent is it sensible to talk about natural endowment, intelligence, temperament or any other global descriptive category for human behaviour?

2 What kind of question is it that seeks to partition behaviour into an inherited and an environmental component?

3 What does it mean to say that individuals, classes, or races differ in natural endowment?

4 How are such differences, once assumed, incorporated in a political ideology?

5 Can characteristics of human behaviour, and their differential distribution between individuals, determine the 'shape' of society?

6 Does society not only impose personal inequalities, but through them determine individual differences?

7 To what extent is empirical evidence determined by value judgements?

8 Does anyone know enough about 'human nature' to implement public policy measures which are justified in its terms? Does the concept of 'human nature' mean anything at all?

9 Do individual personalities affect the acceptance of scientific ideas in the wider community?

10 Is the development of scientific knowledge affected by the growth of political ideas?

In posing such questions it is clear that I am constructing an argument which puts the onus of proof on those holding a traditional interpretation of the meaning of 'natural endowment' and on those seeking to justify or interpret social patterns of inequality in those terms. My reason for laying out my argument in this for[illegible]s that in many senses the notion of natural endowment is the easiest to hold. In many forms of argument concerning the nature of society it is a persuasive move to invoke human nature – 'people are just like that' – because it appeals to inevitability in the guise of biological determinism. It invites us not to enquire too closely how we might change the present pattern of inequalities, and thereby obviates the necessity to make moral judgements on which direction such change *ought* to take (see Unit 1–2 section 2.3.2).

But if such a move is persuasive it is also illegitimate. If some people, classes, nations, succeed in gaining the preponderance of any distribution of the common good because they are naturally better equipped with superior intellect, or if, for example, repression and exploitation are based on a human instinct for aggression, *how* are these human endowments brought to bear in a way which explains the particular structures and their variations, which we observe in society at large?

In the following sections of this unit you will be asked to read a variety of source materials which provide the seminal arguments for particular views on 'human nature' as they relate to the interpretation of the structure of society. I shall proceed in a quasi-historical progression. It is part of my thesis to suggest that the 'scientific facts' on which ideological beliefs about personal worth are based, are themselves often a product of ideological debate of a previous decade.

The first major section of the unit traces the origins of the concept of innate intelligence by examining Darwin's theory of evolution (1.1) and evaluates its implication for views on the nature of society (1.1.1). The translation of evolutionary views into suggestions for social policy was first effected by the Eugenics movement which is traced from its origins in the work of Galton (1.1.2). The impact of the concept of innate ability on political thinking is then discussed both in general terms (1.3) and also with respect to the particular example of immigration legislation (1.2).

The whole of the first section spans a time period from about 1870 to 1930, and assesses the first major impact of the idea of natural endowment both on science and on society.

If natural endowment was the thesis, then its antithesis was the environmental-behavioural school of thought. The scientific and political reactions to doctrinaire forms of biological determinism is discussed in the first part of the second section. The relationship between scientific and ideological thought is discussed briefly and reasons given for the continued use of a concept of inherited intelligence (2.1).

The third section of the unit traces the development within the scientific community of the intelligence testing movement, and explains briefly what an Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is (3.1), and how it has been interpreted (3.1.1, 3.1.2). The way in which this development was incorporated in an ideology of meritocracy is examined (3.2). The latest attempts by some scientists to provide independent verification of the largely inherited nature of intelligence is critically examined at the end of this last major section (3.3).

The unit finishes with an epilogue.

Throughout the text are a series of questions. Some questions, which are numbered, have answers provided at the end of the unit. They are designed to enable you to assess how well you have understood passages of set reading, as well as passages of the correspondence text. In some cases a question will invite you to give your own development of an argument already presented, or your own alternative explanation for some finding. When it is your own view which is wanted, and not your understanding of the author's, this will be clearly indicated in the question. In one or two instances I have asked questions (un-numbered) as a 'spot check' on what you think. In these cases the answers are given below the question.

All in-text questions are designed to help you evaluate your understanding of the concept of intelligence and its implications for social policy, and for ideology. After reading the unit and answering those questions you should be able to formulate the meaning of various terms used in the unit (intelligence, natural selection, meritocracy, educability etc) in your own words. You should be able to outline briefly some criticisms of the concept of intelligence, and of heritability, in terms of the assumptions made in their use. You should be able to outline the development of the concepts in a scientific context, and relate such developments to the ideologies of capitalism and imperial domination.

You do *not* have to remember names of research workers, or the particular evidence they used, or their particular conclusions. *Nor* do you need to be able to learn precise and technical definitions of scientific terms such as IQ, heritability etc.

Whilst the in-text questions are designed to help you towards an ability to articulate arguments about the nature of intelligence, the most important questions which you should be able to respond to are the key questions outlined in this introduction. In one sense this unit is a case study of one form of personal inequality. You should constantly remind yourself as you read it, that the key questions relate to *all* forms of personal inequality. Ask yourself what are the implications of different arguments related to the issue of intelligence for other forms of personal inequality. To those key questions we have provided no direct answers. They are study questions for you to think about, and in the light of which you can judge how well I have managed to answer them with regard to the issue of intelligence, and how far my arguments would generalize to other forms of personal inequality, and to the relationship between empirical evidence and value judgement, science and ideology, in its most general terms.

1 THE IMPACT OF EVOLUTIONARY THEORY

In this section I shall examine in some detail the structure and assumptions underlying the arguments for a hierarchical society in which inequalities of income, wealth, and status are seen as necessary, desirable, or even inevitable because of the role of personal inequalities in determining the shape of civilization as we know it. The discussion is divided into three sections. In the first (1.1.1) the impact of Darwin's theory of evolution is discussed in terms of a prescription for the maintenance of inequality of wealth, status and income. In the second (1.1.2) the growth of the Eugenics movement is described, in which the concept of natural endowment, or the inheritance of intelligence, was elaborated into a eugenic argument. In the third section (1.1.3) I shall discuss the implications of eugenics for the elaboration of, and justification for, a political ideology firmly based on the maintenance of the class structure of Victorian society and the development of imperialist domination.

1.1 DARWIN'S THEORY OF EVOLUTION

In 1859, Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, which work was to revolutionize our thinking about biology, religion, and the very nature of human civilization. The book was based on years of painstaking observation, much of which was made when Darwin was on the voyage of the *Beagle*. In 1838 he read the *Essay on the Principle of Population* by Malthus, which proposed that populations of species are controlled not by their fertility rate but by the lack of food, disease, and other factors in a generally hostile environment. Darwin's original contribution was to couple this idea with that of natural inheritable variations between individuals in a breeding population.

What Darwin proposed was that in a hostile environment only those particular animals which were well-adapted to the environment would survive until they were old enough to breed. The variations of a physical characteristic which made an animal particularly well-adapted to the environment would thus pass on more successfully into the succeeding generation. The offspring of animals with such a characteristic would themselves vary in that characteristic and only those animals with the most successful variations would survive to breed later generations. Thus, by the operation of this principle of natural selection over succeeding generations a species might gradually evolve and adapt to the point where a new and separate species was obtained.

Natural selection was to become the more strongly favoured candidate for the explanation of evolution than the doctrine propounded by Lamarck (1809). Lamarck's theory proposed that a particular piece of behaviour, if practised continuously, would affect bodily structures and this modified body structure would be passed on to succeeding generations. This principle of 'inheritance of acquired characteristics' was a part of a wider principle of perfectibility. Lamarck argued that because each member of a species moulded its behaviour to the environment, and because this form of adaptation was then transmitted to later generations, the development of a species could be conceptualized as the development of perfect adaptation to a natural habitat. Darwin's view was less idealistic. For him the nature of evolution was bush-like – a branching structure in which only the strongest shoots survived, and the less successful ones withered away. Only the fittest individuals survive, and in turn only the best adapted species survive.

Both Darwin and Lamarck were evolutionary theorists, and as such were bitterly opposed by Christian orthodoxy. Only one year after the publication of *The Origin of Species* there was a sensational debate at Oxford between Thomas Huxley and Bishop Wilberforce:

> Wilberforce asked Huxley whether it was through his grandmother or his grandfather that he claimed descent from an ape, thus phrasing the central

51

> issue in terms every man could understand. Huxley replied that an ape would be preferable to the Bishop as an ancestor, and with that the battle began. Science and Religion were at it again.
>
> (Miller, 1962, p 148)

The implications for human evolution had, in fact, been barely alluded to in *The Origin of Species*, and it was not until 1871, that *The Descent of Man* was written. It is in this book that we first obtain the concept of an inherited intellectual faculty. The following extract, 'On the development of the intellectual and moral faculties during primeval and civilized times', gives Darwin's account of human evolution, and its implications for human civilization at the present time. Read the extract in order to be able to:

(a) Describe Darwin's theory of human evolution.

(b) Describe the implications of the theory for the future of present-day civilization.

(c) Describe the role of wealth in the propagation of an intellectually and morally superior human species according to the principle of natural selection.

You may wish to glance at the questions at the end of the extract before commencing it.

READ: 'ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL FACULTIES DURING PRIMEVAL AND CIVILIZED TIMES', PROVIDED AS SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL.

The following questions are designed to test your understanding of Darwin's essay.

Question 1 Describe the process of natural selection outlined in the extract.

Question 2 Darwin argues that characteristics of civilized man have been bred in by a process of natural selection, or survival of the fittest. But natural selection of what, individuals or species?

Question 3 What are the two principal faculties which Darwin sees as important in the emergence of both primeval and civilized humans?

Question 4 Lamarck's theory espoused the doctrine of the inheritance of acquired characteristics. Thus any change in morphology of a muscle, for example, due to constant exercise – say in a blacksmith's forearm, to quote a traditional example – would be converted into a structural change which would in turn be transmitted to the next generation. Whilst Lamarck held that species develop and differentiate entirely according to the principle of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, Darwin was less rigid in his adherence to the principle of natural selection. He felt that Lamarck's principle might *aid* the process of natural selection in some instances. In what connection is this demonstrated in the extract?

Question 5 What is the environment most probably conducive to the development, through natural selection, of civilized tribes of humans?

Question 6 How does Darwin justify the notion that intellect is one of the two most important faculties on which natural selection has operated to produce the observed differences between ourselves and the apes? In what way does it follow that because the intellect was important in the development of the human species from non-humanoids, that variations in intellect are still important determinants of the progress of modern society through natural selection?

Question 7 In what way may wealth be beneficial to the advance of society, according to Darwin?

Question 8 Why do the intellectually superior rear a greater number of children, according to Darwin?

1.1.1 An assessment of Darwin's views

Perhaps the simplest summary of Darwin's view on the role of intelligence in evolution is as follows:

1 Intellectual ability is inherited.

2 Intellectual ability is responsible, along with the development of morality based on a social instinct, for the development of civilized society through a process of natural selection.

3 In civilized society, those of high intellectual ability will be the more successful in any given occupational category.

4 Those more successful will, by the accumulation of wealth and provision of better sustenance, be more prolific in contributing to the next generation.

5 Those of low intellect will be least successful in any occupational category.

6 Of the least successful many will be poor, reckless, and degraded by vice. Some will die young, especially if town dwellers, and thus not contribute in any substantial way to the next generation.

7 Some of the least successful, being reckless and degraded by vice, will marry early and contribute substantially to the next generation, but

8 Men of a mind to marry are probably better endowed in all faculties and conversely the unmarried, less able to contribute any intellectual gifts, will not produce a great number of offspring.

9 Civilized society *may* attain further 'advances' by the operation of natural selection on the inherited characteristics of intellectual ability.

It is the first five of these assumptions which have in later years formed the cornerstone of argument for the meritocratic society in which intelligence is related to reward, and justified by the necessity for social progress. Lest anyone think that these assumptions are hopelessly outmoded, read the following extract from Herrnstein's book (1973) in which he discusses the 'spectre of meritocracy' and starts with the following syllogism:

1 If differences in mental abilities are inherited, and
2 If success requires these abilities, and
3 If earnings and prestige depend on success,
4 Then social standing (which reflects earnings and prestige) will be based to some extent on inherited differences amongst people

> . . . The syllogism . . . (points) to a future in which social classes not only continue but become even more solidly built on inborn differences. As the wealth and complexity of human society grow, there may settle out of the mass of humanity a stratum that is unable to master the common occupations, cannot compete for success and achievement, and is most likely to be born to parents who have similarly failed. In Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* it was malevolent or misguided science that created the 'alphas', 'gammas' and the other distinct types of people. But nature itself is more likely to do the job or something similar, as the less well-known but far prescient book by Michael Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy* has depicted. . . . The troubles he anticipated, and that the syllogism explains, may already be catching the attention of alert social scientists such as Edward Banfield, whose book *The Unheavenly City* describes the increasingly chronic lower class in America's central cities. While Sunday supplements and popular magazines crank out horror-stories about genetic engineering, our society may be sorting itself willy-nilly into inherited classes.
>
> (Herrnstein, 1973, Chapter 5)

Every one of Darwin's assumptions (and those of Herrnstein) is subject to debate, a debate which I shall pursue later in this unit. At this point I want to discuss further

the evidence which Darwin adduces for the importance of the 'intellectual faculty' for human evolution. It is important to grasp that Darwin was essentially basing his case on the plausibility of his argument, as a grand explanatory principle, rather than detailed argument from hard factual evidence. Thus Darwin argued for the importance of intelligence *by analogy*. If the problem solving of apes had elevated them to a higher evolutionary plane in the shape of primeval man, why not assume that a general intellectual faculty enabled primeval man to evolve a civilized society? That Darwin's case was not backed by hard evidence can be seen from his early doubts about intelligence as one of the more important hereditary characteristics explaining the evolution of civilized man. In response to reading Galton's book, *Hereditary Genius* (1869) he wrote: 'You have made a convert of an opponent in one sense, for I have always maintained that, excepting fools, man did not differ much in intellect, only in zeal and hard work, and I still think this an eminently important difference.'

Despite this comment, *Descent of Man* was written in the following two years and intellect had gained the ascendancy in Darwin's thinking. It is ironic, in this respect, that Galton's own evidence for a hereditary mechanism in the transmission of intellectual ability, and much vaunted by Darwin, would in the eyes of later generations seem fitting evidence for an environmental explanation of the transmission of intellectual ability in terms of social conditioning.

1.1.2 Galton's 'evidence'

What Galton had proposed to do in his book *Hereditary Genius* is clear enough:

> I propose to show in this book that man's natural abilities are derived by inheritance, under exactly the same limitations as are the forms and physical features of the whole organic world. Consequently, as it is easy, notwithstanding those limitations, to obtain by careful selection a permanent breed of dogs or horses gifted with peculiar powers of running, or of doing anything else, so it would be quite practical to produce a highly-gifted race of men by judicious marriages during several consecutive generations. I shall show that social agencies of an ordinary character, whose influence is little suspected, are at this moment working towards the degradation of human nature, and that others are working towards its improvement. I conclude that each generation has enormous power over the natural gifts of those that follow, and maintain that it is a duty we owe to humanity to investigate the range of that power, and to exercise it in a way that, without being unwise toward ourselves, shall be most advantageous to future inhabitants of the earth.
>
> (Galton, 1869, p 1)

What Galton actually did was to study the lives of 'eminent men' and demonstrate that a large proportion of their forebears had also been eminent men, although sometimes eminent in other fields than those professions or interests of the current member of the family. There were forty-eight such eminent sons for 100 eminent fathers, which Galton took to be proof of inheritance. It seems unbelievable that he did not at any point consider the alternative explanation, that upbringing and education were, at least in part, determinants of intellectual ability. How strongly fixed was Galton's mind against such an idea can be seen from the following explanation he gives for the disproportionately high number of eminent scientists who not only spawned highly gifted sons, (women are not considered an important part of this production process!) but sons who were also gifted in the *same* profession.

> It is, I believe, only to the favourable conditions of their early training, that an unusually large proportion of the sons of the most gifted men of science become distinguished in the same career. They have been nurtured in an atmosphere of free enquiry and observing as they grow older that myriads of problems lie on every side of them . . . they throw themselves with ardour into a field of labour so peculiarly tempting.
>
> (Galton, 1869, p 197)

Thus Galton is able to give an explanation in terms of training for a son's predilection to remain in science, but *not* for his general level of talent. It has been suggested that Galton was so disenchanted with his own education – having been forced to train as a medical practitioner by his father in his early teens – that he could not credit education with advancing anyone's intellect one iota. (Training was often equated with education, and the early stages of child development were often ignored in this respect.) But a more probable explanation can be surmised from this passage in Galton's *Memories* (1908) 'Speaking generally, most authors agreed that all bodily and some mental qualities were inherited by brutes, but they refused to believe the same of man. Moreover, theologians made a sharp distinction between the body and the mind of man on purely dogmatic grounds.'

The whole evolutionary debate was a debate between science and religion, with no holds barred. The dogmatic emphasis on the inheritance of mental characteristics provided a link between humans, brutes and savages which was an important plank in establishing the continuity of evolution, and thus the invalidity of the theological division between the body and the mind on the one hand, and between men and apes on the other. To have conceded a non-hereditary basis for intelligence and higher mental activity at this time would not have been to admit the influence of the environment but rather the all-powerful hand of God. Thus the idea of an inherited intellectual faculty, which was to be taken up and incorporated into imperialist ideology through the Eugenics movement, and persist to this day in certain quarters, was born of an earlier ideological battle between liberalism and conservatism in the guise of science and religion.

1.1.3 Implications and implementations

I have shown how the evolutionary argument for a society in which the strong in mind shall inherit the earth was based on the idea that the intellectually well-endowed would have access to a larger share of the common good, and thus secure a better future for us all by ensuring a larger and healthier (and more intelligent) family. As you have seen, Galton was not slow in advocating a science of eugenics, in which the principles of natural selection would be applied to the production of a more advanced and civilized society through control of the breeding population to ensure a less haphazard progress than that hinted at by Darwin in the extract which you have read.

Question 9 Nature, left to its own devices, showed some signs of needing a helping hand, according to the eugenicists. Some of the problems of securing advance through the unaided operation of natural selection had been apparent to Darwin. What were they?

The middle classes came to regard themselves as the fittest to survive and thus came to think that they had a biological as well as a social right to their privileged position in a system of *laissez-faire* Victorian capitalism. Any attempt to introduce state education, or minimal health standards, could be seen as 'tampering with nature' and diluting the stock of genetic material on which advancing civilization was based. 'The middle class began to see the working class almost as a separate race – shorter and less healthy, with alien language and culture; a race born to *be* workers' (Rose, 1973).

In the early days eugenicists concentrated their attention on protecting civilization from criminals, political dissidents, lunatics, idiots, prostitutes and sexual offenders, by advocating a termination of their right to breed, most often by the expedient of sterilization. Galton's approach of studying the distribution of intelligence through family histories was applied to the feeble-minded. Two particular cases studied in America, but to become famous in Britain, showed a high proportion of feeble-minded

born to feeble-minded parents. One study first published in 1877, followed the progeny of five mentally defective sisters. Their descendants numbered 709, including people connected by marriage or illegal union; 128 were prostitutes, 142 habitual paupers on outdoor relief, 64 workhouse inmates, and 76 habitual criminals. The second case concerned a father who had an illegitimate son by a presumed feeble-minded girl. Of the ensuing 480 descendants following this line 143 were feeble-minded, 36 were illegitimate, 24 were alcoholics and 33 were sexually immoral. The father later married and the ensuing line contained 496 descendants of whom only three were 'somewhat degenerate'.

On the face of it this was impressive evidence but in fact it hardly stands up to close scrutiny. There was no hard evidence that the original mothers were indeed feeble-minded, nor that what was seen as feeble-mindedness or degenerate behaviour in the poorer classes would not be passed off as eccentricity in the more well-to-do, nor that any genuine feeble-mindedness in the progeny was not the result of the stigmatization of illegitimacy and poverty. It is easy from today's viewpoint to see the 'cycle of deprivation' and 'social conditioning' as explanatory concepts for the findings of such family studies. To an older generation such studies were forbidding portents of the future of mankind.

The major fallacy of the eugenics movement was its concentration on the genetic effects of breeding of the extremely inferior stock (as it was seen). Darwin had already pointed out that the most efficient way of changing the genetic stock of a breeding population was to concentrate on boosting the breeding rate of the slightly above average individuals, and conversely, to depress that of the slightly below average.

In the present century birth-rate cannot be assumed to be higher in either the higher status or higher income sectors (assuming for a moment that this is where the pool of genetic 'superiority' exists). Working class families are in fact larger than middle class families. Although life expectancy is shorter in the working class, the main cause of high birth-rate is the number of individuals surviving up till breeding age. In this respect there is much less difference between classes than formerly. This fact, coupled with patterns of marriage and family spacing, accounts for the higher birth-rate in working class families.

If eugenicists could do little but exhort the middle classes to breed and encourage the working classes to practice contraception – neither particularly realistic possibilities – then at least they could concentrate on the prevention of inferior races from swamping the universe. Galton had been quite specific in this respect, his work containing such phrases as 'from the highest Caucasian to the lowest savage . . .'. Evolutionary theory as applied to competition within the economic sector of *laissez-faire* capitalism, had come to be called Social Darwinism. This philosophy, when translated into terms appropriate to the great wave of colonial expansion during the latter half of the nineteenth century, gave credence to the idea that the colonialists were superior, more biologically fit, *as a race*. Their ability to carry through a policy of imperialist domination was proof positive of the fact that the colonialist was of superior genetic stock to the colonized.

Similar feelings were held, not only towards the races of the colonies, but towards other nations in general. 'The wogs begin at Calais', and have done since well before the time of Darwin. Now, however, a pseudoscientific justification could be given for such a racist attitude. Such a justification was to be elaborated and presented in that extreme form of European Nationalism – Nazism. A particular attraction of this form of racism was its ability to underemphasize class divisions at home, and play up the general inferiority of other nations.

Some early eugenicists were optimistic. In 1883, Holland disclaimed on the fate of the Blacks in America: 'Galton's law is squarely across their path, and the sooner they die gently out the better. . . .' Elsewhere some saw the need to exhort the

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superior race to breed more rapidly. This was one approach tried by Vorster in South Africa before he moved on to more drastic remedies, such as apartheid. Perhaps the major involvement of the eugenics movement in racial issues, however, was in its exhortation for strict immigration laws (see section 1.2 below).

I have suggested a link between science and political ideology in general terms. Early work on intelligence testing coupled with the background of evolutionary theory was used as a justification for the social patterns of inequality which existed as a result of *laissez-faire* capitalism, imperial domination and European nationalism. Whether or not there is any scientific validity in the evolutionary analysis of modern society is, in one sense, much less important than the use of the analysis to prop up an ideology which has been responsible for the particular economic inequalities of the pre-war era. By this I do not mean that an ideology of inequality draws its *only* support from eugenic arguments, nor do I mean that it is not important to re-assess the scientific validity of the notion of an innate intelligence. But before embarking on this latter course I think it is important to demonstrate that the eugenic argument has had direct bearing on particular areas of government policy as well as providing a rationale for a general political stance.

1.2 IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA

The intimate link between the intelligence testers and the organs of government can be clearly seen in the formulation of immigrant policy in the United States of America at the beginning of the twentieth century. Many prominent intelligence testers were, like Galton in Britain, founder members of eugenic societies. They were prepared to back their strong conviction about the inherited origins of intelligence to the extent that they espoused positive political programmes for the ordering of society in a way conducive to the preservation of the 'national stock'.

This involvement was to go further than speaking at eugenics society meetings however. Sometimes speaking as members of a eugenics society, and at other times called to speak as dispassionate scientific commentators, many early psychologists gave their views and evidence to Congressional Committees concerned with the elaboration of immigration policy, and welfare policy for the poor.

The involvement in this fashion of 'science' and 'politics' has been vividly portrayed in an historical account of the early intelligence testers by Kamin (1974).

READ THE EXTRACT BY KAMIN WHICH IS IN THE COURSE READER.

Using Kamin as a prompt, work out your own answers to the following questions:

Question 10 To what extent were the earlier intelligence testers *responsible* for the formulation of immigration policy?

Question 11 What grounds, other than inferior intellectual quality, would you think were popularly given in order to justify the formulation of a restrictive immigration policy?

Question 12 Suggest grounds other than genetic pollution which might have concerned the American government in considering its immigration policies.

Kamin's extract demonstrates the complex web of interactions which are brought into play when social change is implemented. Policy designed to bolster up an economic position, or to solve unemployment, is cast in the form of a desirable piece of *social* engineering, and justified in terms of quasi-scientific concept. This concept – inherited intelligence, in the present case – itself gains popularity by playing on pre-existing prejudice in the population at large.

It would be naive to propose that the particular institutions, or social groups, which propagate these interactions invariably operate with conscious intent or clearly defined goals, but this does not detract from the existence of such social processes, qua processes. Moreover, the present example demonstrates quite clearly that the dilemma posed by the potential perversion of scientific discovery is not merely confined to the development of techniques for atomic fission and fusion.

2 REACTION

The backlash against the hereditary argument was building up during the years that preceded the Second World War, and reached a crescendo when the full impact of Nazism became apparent. The moral implications of the eugenic argument could no longer be ignored. In order to justify the ideology of post-war liberalism an anti-hereditary position was adopted. All individual differences were held to be the result of environmental circumstances during development. Within psychology, which was growing apace during the first part of the century and producing its own crop of psychometricians, there was also an academic reaction to all forms of explanation which involved innate factors, hereditary instincts and the like.

You will remember that Darwin had referred to social instincts at points throughout his discussion. It was a particular habit of many psychologists working in the late nineteenth century to describe behaviour in terms of a number of instincts. William James proposed forty such instincts, whilst William McDougall proposed a modest seven. But by 1924 at least 849 separate instincts had been proposed by different writers on the subject. It is perhaps not unnatural that a reaction set in, and it was in the form of Behaviourism. The early behaviourists believed as an article of faith that all behaviour was learned, and used the work of Pavlov, who demonstrated the existence of conditioned responses in the nervous system, as a support for their case. The following extract is taken from the classic text-book of Behaviourism, first published in 1924 by its champion at the time, John B. Watson. The presentation, though didactic, gives the flavour of the argument very well. As you read this extract, you should bear in mind its likely impact on the evaluation of the work of Darwin, Galton and all the other exponents of the evolutionary school.

READ: 'ARE THERE ANY HUMAN INSTINCTS' BY JOHN B. WATSON, SUPPLIED AS SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL.

Question 13 Why, in Watson's opinion, is structural or physiological variation not important in the explanations of the evolution of human intelligence?

Question 14 How would you explain differences in intellectual capacity, according to Watson?

Question 15 Given Watson's view of the environmental determination of intelligence, how do you suppose that he would explain the evolution and development of the human race to its present stage?

That Watson saw his own views on psychology as relevant to the conduct of society is not in doubt from this impassioned if somewhat vague exhortation:

> Behaviourism ought to be a science that prepares men and women for understanding the principles of their own behaviour. It ought to make men and women eager to prepare themselves to bring up their own children in a healthy way. I wish I could picture for you what a rich and wonderful individual we should make of every healthy child if only we could let it shape itself properly and then provide for it a universe in which it could

> exercise that organization – a universe unshackled by legendary folk-lore of happenings thousands of years ago; unhampered by disgraceful political history; free of foolish customs and conventions which have no significance in themselves, yet which hem the individual in like taut steel bands.
>
> (Watson, 1924, p 303)

It is perhaps fitting that these views should stem from the 'new democracy' in which all men are born equal, even if there is some doubt that Americans have ever interpreted equality in any other respect than that of free competition.

Perhaps the most fruitful impact of behaviourism at the time of its emergence, was not so much in the positive hypothesis it advanced – and which was to be quickly modified – but in its heuristic value as a critique of earlier studies. The ready and unjustified assumption that an intelligence test was a valid quantitative index of intellectual ability and that, moreover, it was a direct measure of an inherited intellectual faculty unhindered by any previous training, coaching, or education was, in the light of the behaviourist assumption, clearly untenable. The need for a rethink was obvious.

Moreover, the study of family resemblance in intellectual capability or of different racial groups in Western society, took on a more doubtful significance. The behaviourists emphasized how *early* training was important, and so by implication they forced attention away from the effect of environment as mediated by formal education to its mediation via early development within the family. Such early training was obviously far from Galton's mind as a candidate for determining intelligence.

Perhaps the most important point of the behaviourist manifesto is the implication it has for the likely effects of a social pattern of inequality (income distribution etc.) on the individual. Provided that you grant at least some small part to the effects of environment on intelligence, then we can be sure that political control explicitly based on a theory of genetic differences can only lead to a situation in which some groups of individuals will be disadvantaged economically, and hence, to some degree, intellectually. From the environmental point of view, whilst the economic and social environment ensures the virtual separation of roles of blacks, women, and 'the working class', then it is not surprising that such groups will be treated as innately inferior, given a poorer environment (or prevented from moving from such an environment) and thus become trapped in their present role. In this respect there is an apt moral tale from Bernard Williams:

> Suppose that in a certain society great prestige is attached to membership of a warrior class, the duties of which require great physical strength. This class has in the past been recruited from certain wealthy families only; but egalitarian reformers achieve a change in the rules, by which warriors are recruited from all sections of the society on the results of a suitable competition. The effect of this, however, is that the wealthy families still provide virtually all the warriors, because the rest of the populace is so undernourished by reason of poverty that their physical strength is inferior to that of the wealthy and well nourished. The reformers protest that equality of opportunity has not really been achieved; the wealthy reply that in fact it has, and that the poor now have the opportunity of becoming warriors – it is just bad luck that their characteristics are such that they do not pass the test. 'We are not', they might say, 'excluding anyone for being poor; we exclude people for being weak, and it is unfortunate that those who are poor are also weak.'
>
> The answer would seem to most people feeble, and even cynical . . . one knows that there is a causal connection between being poor and being undernourished and being physically weak. One supposes further that something could be done – subject to whatever economic conditions obtain in the imagined society – to alter the distribution of wealth. All this being so, the

appeal by the wealthy to the 'bad luck' of the poor must appear as a disingenuous.

> It seems then that a system of allocation will fall short of equality of opportunity if the allocation of the good in question in fact works out unequally or disproportionately between different sections of society, if the unsuccessful sections are under a disadvantage which could be removed by further reform or social action. This was very clear in the imaginary example that was given, because the causal connections involved are simple and well known. In actual fact, however, the situations of this type that arise are more complicated, and it is easier to overlook the causal connections involved.
>
> (Bernard Williams, 1969)

Thus the presence of a persistent suppressed group, probably showing a lack of competence, is guaranteed not only by the harsher forms of segregation, such as the caste system, or apartheid, but by any 'equal opportunity' system which is not accompanied by *positive* and *informed* intervention (see Units 1–2).

A further complication, which we shall examine more closely later, is that where intervention is itself based on goodwill rather than theoretical insight, then it may not equalize opportunity. The failure of the Headstart Programme in America in which the poor, mainly black, children were given an enriched educational environment, has often been used as evidence for the unalterable genetic basis of intelligence. Later evidence suggests that the programme was misguided. The children had been given only brief exposure to the new educational environment. Moreover later research suggests that any kind of intervention programme would need to focus on pre-school years and the home environment.

A genetic explanation of intelligence which *seems* to offer a justification for maintaining the status quo with regard to underprivileged groups, is rather like explanations of individual human behaviour in terms of instincts, (or of political activity in terms of conspiracies). It is an *easy* theory to uphold, because it seems to place the burden of proof on the environmentalist, who must spell out and explain the persistence of individual inequalities between classes, races and individuals.

2.1 CONTEXT OF THE DEBATE

With environmental explanations firmly established there has been a continued academic debate on the hereditary/environmental origins of intelligence (and other facets of personality as well) ever since. In commenting on a debate on this very subject in the Cambridge Union in July 1970, Liam Hudson (1972) contended that the argument has been intermittent and that it has waxed and waned in temperature according to circumstances outside of the academic world. He pointed to the dearth of public debate on the issue of race and intelligence immediately following the demise of the Nazis. Significant exceptions were South Africa and America, where racial tensions were continuing features of everyday life. Only recently has the debate resurfaced on this side of the Atlantic and at a time when immigrant communities, and the indigenous black population are posing 'social problems'.

During the post-war period in Britain the origins of intelligence have not preoccupied the public mind to the same extent that has been the case in America where racial tensions, for reasons too numerous to list here, have been stronger. Certainly in many psychology departments in this country the issue has been suppressed by a series of comfortable evasions. In the true spirit of public school debating, social psychologists have espoused the environmental point of view, whilst psychometricians have tended to espouse the hereditary standpoint, leaving the students to make up their own minds. Alternatively the final solution has been put forward – that intelligence is in part of inherited origin and in part environmental. On the surface

this seems to be an unexceptional solution, but it does suggest a number of questions – what is intelligence; how much inheritance, how much environment; what are the limits which social engineering might reach in boosting intelligence; is this the sort of problem psychologists should be examining?

Certainly the philosophical, political and ideological overtones of the intelligence debate were not considered by post-war generations of psychology students, despite the evidence I have shown which implicates some of the leadi g intelligence testers of the previous decades in overt political activity. Nevertheless it is impossible to ignore the strong association between the current cultural climate and the practice of science. In Darwin's time evolutionary theory was implicated in the dispute between the world-views of science and religion. In the build-up to the Second World War, Social Darwinism and genetic theories of race were interwoven with the conflicting views on social order – the authoritarian vs liberal political philosophies. Now conflicting views on the origins of intelligence are arraigned against each other in the debate on school standards – the defence of the grammar and public schools, vs comprehensives.

It is an oversimplification, on the other hand, to regard scientific work as totally enmeshed in working out solutions governed by a problematic determined by society as a whole. At least in part particular scientific concepts and techniques have their own momentum. Kuhn, in his book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, has concentrated on this aspect of scientific progress. He describes scientists as working according to certain paradigms – sets of ideas, concepts, techniques, ways of talking – which are occasionally overthrown by events. The continuity of a paradigm is in some sense assured for considerable lengths of time by the fact that science is practised by a self-educative élite which is mostly engaged on the work of 'normal' science. This involves using agreed techniques and procedures to observe and measure phenomena in an orderly attempt to increase the scope and generality of prevailing theory. It is only occasionally that the very techniques and ways of classifying the world are themselves questioned, and it is at such times that a new paradigm will emerge (cf. Darwin's theory of evolution).

There is much current debate about the exact precursors of a paradigm change, which takes the form of disagreement as to whether the political/ideological climate pushes science into a paradigm change, or whether it is merely an accompanying factor when the internal developments within science themselves lead to a paradigm change. However, there is general agreement that the normal march of progress in science is by work *within* a paradigm.

It is this normal science which must, at least in part, account for the continued use of intelligence tests and continued research into the origins of intelligence, even in periods when the ideological debate has subsided. In psychology there are particularly powerful reasons why the intelligence testing paradigm has persevered and these reasons, incidentally, account for the increasing technical sophistication of the scientific arguments employed in the neredity/environment debate. Testing for individual differences has been a particularly attractive occupation for the psychologist. It combines an emphasis on objective measurement and statistical manipulation of test scores which serve to pacify the long-standing paranoia which psychologists have had about being respectable empirical scientists. Further than this, the preoccupation with individual differences, particularly of a kind which might plausibly be assumed to derive from innate factors, perhaps stems from the psychologist's need to establish his own topic area. At an early point in time, at the turn of the century, psychology was busy establishing itself as an empirical science to be distinguished from its mother-discipline, philosophy. At a later point in time psychology was seeking to preserve its own identity in an expanding universe of social science disciplines. Intelligence testing has served to give psychology a distinctive paradigm to claim as its own over this time span.

The intelligence testing movement thus contains a powerful impetus for self-preservation. The preoccupation with measurement and scientific respectability has lead to an increasing emphasis on practising science as it is done in the physical and biological sciences, and in an increasing level of pointed accusation, by the testers, that they are the people who are doing 'proper science', and that their critics simply misunderstand what they are doing. Thus Eysenck, for example asks:

> But can we really take what the experts say seriously, when the experts seem to be at loggerheads themselves? There has been so much discussion, often impassioned, in which geneticists oppose geneticists, psychometricians psychometricians, that the layman may be excused for wondering if this is not all bogus material that he is being asked to consider, presented by people who are only venting their spleen. There are a number of reasons why this appealing notion is in fact wrong, and why we can put some faith in what the experts say. In the first place, we must be sure we are referring to 'experts', in the true sense (that is, people who have specialized in the relevant fields of behavioural genetics, psychometrics and intelligence testing, have contributed significantly to these areas, and are familiar with the enormous amount of research which is relevant to a discussion of the field).
>
> (Eysenck, 1971, p 12)*

It is not surprising, therefore that since the end of the last war, and particularly during the 1960s, the renewed interest in the hereditary nature of intelligence has taken a more 'scientific' turn. However, it should be clear from what I have had to say so far in this unit that what is an empirical fact ascertained through the methods of 'pure science' and what is a value-laden judgement based on ideological belief is by no means easy to distinguish.

Controversy has recently centred on the proper role of education in relation to individual differences in intellectual ability. But if the debate centres on education and its surrounding political philosophy, this still has enormous implications for society as a whole. It is true to say that the grand causal connection between the nature of intelligence and the structure of society is still the central issue. But to follow the more modern development in this area I shall have to retrace my steps and look a little more closely at what is meant by 'intelligence'.

3 THE INTELLIGENCE TESTING MOVEMENT

No one need doubt that individual differences exist. Each of us differs from the other in level of mathematical ability, drinking capacity, and in ability to play games, do crosswords, fix televisions, and knit socks. Some such skills are very strongly influenced by training, and different levels of achievement merely reflect different levels of practice. Gardening, driving and playing whist are just some examples of predominantly learned skills. Other skills might well be primarily influenced by constitutional factors, like having perfect pitch, or being the healthiest man in the world. None of these cases is likely to arouse much interest in the present context because the skills being discussed are specific.

Setting aside such differences in specific ability we can ask a more threatening question – do we differ from each other in our general level of skilled performance or all round competence? We can ask whether people differ in their overall ability to cope with life, to adjust to the many demands that modern society makes on us, and to remain flexible, resourceful, and imaginative in the many different kinds of situation which confront us in everyday life. On the question of general competence

* *See article by Rose, S.* et al, *reproduced in part in the Course Reader, for an attack on Eysenck's own credentials as an expert.*

few would deny that there are genuine individual differences to be observed. The kinds of behaviour observed in the mentally subnormal or the mentally ill are sufficiently distinctive to demonstrate that there is at least some kind of scale of general competence in existence. Moreover, there are many ways in which each of us makes distinctions based on competence every day of our lives. We take individuals to be more or less bright or stupid, neurotic or stable, creative or stuck-in-the-mud.

It is a common aspect of the behaviour of the human race, and every member of it, that we adopt expectancies of other people, and that these expectancies are often based around certain apparent differences in competence between people. When such expectancies are over-elaborated, and when they are applied indiscriminately to differences in skin colour, sex or social class, we have the beginnings of prejudice. But expectancies we have, even if they are only the innocent predictions of how well an interviewee would perform in a new job or how a President will perform under the stress of office. There is a scale of competence which exists then at the level of consciousness, or everyday human experience.

As you have already seen, for Darwin such 'competence' was resolved into two faculties, that of intellect and that of morality, and the existence of these faculties was taken to be self-evident.

Psychologists have, over many years, tried to capture the concept of intelligence in testable form. After many years few would be prepared to offer a theory of intelligence, but the following is a list of some popular definitions offered by prominent mental testers:

> 'To judge well, to comprehend well, to reason well, these are the essential activities of intelligence' (Binet and Simon).
>
> 'the ability to carry on abstract thinking' (Terman).
>
> 'the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act properly, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment' (Wechsler).
>
> 'intelligent activity consists in grasping the essentials in a situation and responding appropriately to them' (Heim).
>
> 'innate, general, cognitive ability' (Burt).

This list is hardly inspiring in its ability to tell you in any definitive way what intelligence is, and the interpretation by Burt in particular (innate cognitive ability) demonstrates the tendency to confuse a definition of intelligence with its putative origins. But neither is intelligence simply 'what an intelligence test measures'. To understand what an Intelligence Quotient is, and the limitations of its use in the formulation of educational policy, you will need to examine briefly the way in which an intelligence test is constructed.

3.1 WHAT IS IQ?

Verbal descriptions of the nature of intelligence such as those listed above accentuate abstract reasoning ability. Thus people are conceived of as solving problems by inventing or applying rules or patterns of inference to deal with the elements of the problem solving situation. It is in this sense that human behaviour is seen as insightful and planned, and is contrasted with the blind trial and error procedures which are said to typify much of animal learning.

In postulating such rules or reasoning processes it has been assumed that the skills involved can be ordered in terms of the specificity of the rules which apply to them. For instance, balancing on a high wire will have a greater degree of transference to the development of the skill of high diving, than to the development of, say, mathematical skills. High diving and tight rope walking both presuppose a certain level of perceptual-motor co-ordination. On the other hand mathematical skill

may have more in common with logical thought than it has with balancing on the high wire, perhaps in terms of some skill in using symbolic notation. It is thus possible to imagine a hierarchy in which skills of co-ordination or dexterity and skills of symbol manipulation are seen as being of a higher order than the more specific skills of balancing, diving, mathematics and logical argument. To complete the argument I might suppose that both skills of co-ordination and skills of symbol manipulation are themselves dependent on an even more general skill such as 'quickness of thinking' or 'computing power'. Thus the four lower order skills are connected in particular ways with two higher order skills, which are themselves connected with an even higher order skill.

Whether the particular hierarchy I have mapped out is true or not, it is possible to conceive of some form of hierarchy which would enable us to make some kind of general statement about human performance. Notice that the more you might know about the higher order variables governing performance, the greater your power of predicting the range of subordinate skills the individual will be good at, and the greater confidence you would have about predicting how easily that person would develop an as yet unlearned skill. In the example given no amount of training in mathematical skills could compensate for a lack of the more general ability in symbol manipulation, and even if an attempt were made to improve this latter ability or skill, it would be thwarted in the absence of quickness of thinking. The assumption made is that the higher order skills are more difficult to train, and that most of them result from inborn capacities which set severe limits on what training can do.

One further assumption made in intelligence testing is that appropriate techniques can be found for measuring the higher order skills of abstract reasoning, uncluttered by specific bits of information or knowledge which the testee has acquired.

Are these assumptions valid?

The validity of these assumptions can only be checked by some attempt at empirical justification.

In practice psychologists have proceeded to justify these kinds of assumptions by formulating a vast range of different types of test questions which are thought to have some *a priori* connection with fairly high level cognitive skills. They have then subjected the results of such tests to a process of factor analysis. This process, first extensively developed by one of Galton's pupils, Pearson, and refined by Spearman in Britain and Thurstone in the United States of America, seeks out statistical associations between the different types of question in the total set of questions given. As an example of this procedure, suppose that the questions in an intelligence test have been administered to many hundreds or thousands of individuals. Further suppose that it has been noticed that individuals who get high scores on one particular type of question nearly always also get high scores on another particular type of question. We might then begin to class such sets of questions together. Conversely we can also require something else of our classes, namely that individuals who answer questions well which come from one class, have no particular tendency to do well *or* badly on questions from another class. In this way we might search for classes each of which is independent of each other and which seems to measure some different aspect of performance.

The classes are said to measure different factors. The application of a factor analysis to the questions from an intelligence test administered to many people can thus generate a set of factors if, and only if, there are indeed some communalities between the different questions which have been administered. Now it is true that there are various forms of factor analysis which may be applied to data, and as such there are different factors which may be generated, even from the same set of data. I shall have to plead special privilege and ask you to take on trust that although different factors can be generated, factors are indeed produced, and that disagreement usually

centres on whether the factors are arranged in a nested hierarchy or not. Let me illustrate that point. (cf. Heim, 1954, for fuller details of the appraisal of intelligence). Figure 1 illustrates a hierarchy of factors as suggested by Vernon. The figure suggests that below a general cognitive factor (g) there are two distinct sub-factors related to spatial ability on the one hand, and verbal ability on the other hand. Each of these second order factors themselves relate to other, more specific, sub-factors. On the other hand we have the arrangement of factors suggested by Thurstone and a number of later American workers.

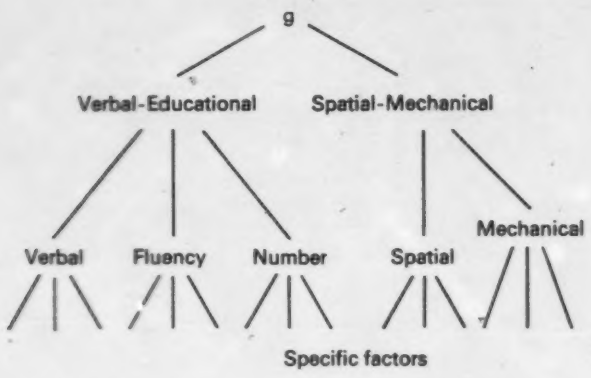

FIGURE 1

In this case, all factors are assumed to form sub-divisions of a general factor (g) but do not themselves contain sub-divisions. This latter analysis is based on early intelligence tests, used by Thurstone.

The difference between the nested hierarchical analysis of the British analysis (Figure 1), which accentuates the involvement of general intelligence even in the lower level skills, and the simple hierarchy of the American analysis (Figure 2), which emphasizes the relative independence of specific factors, may have interesting connotations for the involvement of science with the general climate of public opinion to be found on the two sides of the Atlantic. At this stage, however, my point is simply to note that very similar factors appear in both kinds of analysis.

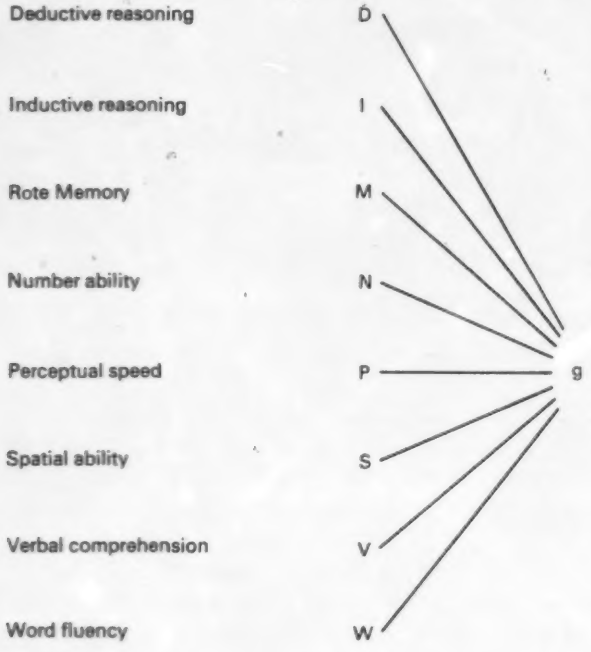

FIGURE 2

65

It is also important to point out that many questions in the initial 'battery' which is given in the developmental stage of an intelligence test do not prove to be associated with any of the kinds of factors mentioned above. Thus 'what is the capital of England?' and 'what spices are used in making a curry paste?' would be destined for the scrap heap. It is assumed that such questions relate to highly specific skills or knowledge which are of no use in understanding broad cognitive functioning. Equally it is important to realize that the residual questions remaining in the test can be taken, *as a set*, as providing a broad measure of the general intelligence factor (g), even though specific subsets of questions within that general range might also be measuring other factors.

It is now possible to ask two questions about the relationship between intelligence as that intuitively defined concept used in everyday language, and 'g' the measure of general intelligence taken from an IQ test and which I shall refer to in general terms simply as IQ .

Question 16 In what sense is IQ more specific than the concept of intelligence as it might have been used by Darwin, for example?

Question 17 In what sense is an IQ test more objective than a personal assessment of intelligence?

Having shown in what sense there appears to be some general factor which some mental testers have even been prepared to describe as intelligence, how might it be possible to demonstrate its importance in understanding human behaviour in the broader context? After all, the factorial approach merely assesses the presence of a common factor (g) in an inventory of arbitrarily chosen questions. It states only that there is a certain coherence to the set of questions contained in the test. It says nothing of the importance of that factor in allowing us to predict anything about human behaviour outside of the intelligence test situation itself. It is an *assumption* that the IQ test has measured a general aspect of human performance and this assumption needs to be validated against some external criterion.

3.1.1 Validation of IQ as a measure of intelligence

The problem of validation has been summarized succinctly by Alice Heim as follows:

> Psychological testing is based on a paradox. If there is a valid criterion of, for instance, intelligence, why use an intelligence test? But there is no perfect criterion so we must make use of intelligence tests. But how then can we validate the tests? – against personal judgements, academic examinations, chronological age (for children), occupation and socio-economic status (for adults), predictive capacity, criterion groups, factor analysis, construct validation and other tests.
>
> It is generally agreed that each of these criteria has its drawbacks and that none can be equated with intelligence. Yet most people who have had much to do with the intelligence test – however sceptical they may have been at the outset – come to believe that it is the single best means of appraising someone's cognitive capacity, the most reliable in every sense, the least contaminated by acquired knowledge (on the part of the subject) and by prejudice (on the part of the appraiser). They believe that, over the years, the well-constructed intelligence test has proved itself to be a useful and fair guide as to how the individual will react when faced with a situation demanding a grasp of essentials and an appropriate response.
>
> (Alice Heim, 1970, p 111)

In the context of professional appraisal within the psychological testing service this is probably a fair summary. Suppose, for instance, that a child is found to be very backward at reading and is referred for assessment. In that instance the intelligence

test provides inferential evidence on the general level of cognitive functioning which can be placed alongside such data as the child's emotional adjustment, its support in the home environment, its attitude to school, its motivation to succeed, and its general physiological well-being. But it is another matter when the IQ score is used as one of the only criteria for choice of an educational career, or adoption of a government policy on education. In these latter situations we are forced to be more circumspect about the validity of the IQ as an indicator of general intelligence, or cognitive ability.

In the quotation from Alice Heim great stress is laid on the reliability of the IQ test (cf. question 17). Another important criterion seems to be what is called in the jargon of the psychometrician 'face validity' – which reduces to saying that the test strikes the observer as being reasonable. But even on this criterion alone, can this be really said to be true? In educational selection the intelligence test is not individually administered – it is a written test administered in large groups. In the 11+ examination employed in this country it was one of a battery of other tests designed to measure more specific academic achievements. In this context a number of objections can be raised to the assumption that such an IQ test is a straightforward measure of abstract reasoning ability.

First, no test can entirely omit the measurement of miscellaneous and specific bits of information which the pupil might have picked up not only at school, but at home, from the parents and television, and from the peer group. Secondly, pupils may not recognize that the answers to questions are implied by the questions, and that the question must be answered within its own frame of reference. Third, a pupil's skill in knowing what testers want may enable him or her to see the point of some questions and understand instructions more clearly than others. Fourth, there is a premium on speed which a pupil may not be able to handle unless there has been specific coaching. Related to this is the fifth point, which is that the test assumes a pupil who is motivated to perform quickly and efficiently. This will be determined in large part not only in terms of particular attitude to being tested, but to the whole school environment.

To the extent that the IQ test, as used in educational selection procedures, may also be testing motivation, speed, ability to follow instructions, and other factors it can hardly be seen as a straightforward measure of abstract reasoning, and in this sense it loses some face validity. One reaction to this line of argument has sometimes been that speed, motivation, attitude to testing, and the like are as much indicative of intellectual quality as is abstract reasoning ability. There is an implicit acceptance of this line of argument when an intelligence test is validated against later achievement – so-called predictive validation.

The predictive validity of a test is defined, as the name suggests, as the ability of the intelligence test to predict achievement at school leaving examinations, or some other 'objective' criterion of success. Any test which has been specifically devised to have good predictive validity is particularly likely to include questions which tap a slightly different set of factors than those which were designed for other purposes, and it is not unlikely that they include some measures of test attitude, motivation, and scholastic perseverance. No tests of intelligence, not least those used in an educational selection programme, can be entirely free from contamination by non-intellectual factors. It would seem safer to label such written group tests as tests of scholastic aptitude or of 'educability', especially when used in an educational context.

A fundamental point to grasp with respect to intelligence tests is that their construction and validation necessitates the introduction of assumptions which are bound to be value-laden. In construction, the initial battery of questions delimits the scope of the final version of the test. In validation, the objective criterion against which the test is standardized is itself determined by ideological notions of success and achieve-

ment in the intellectual sphere. Consequently, I would say that an IQ test is best regarded as a complex quantitative measure which acts as a rough index of an intuitive notion of intelligence, and which, because of certain artifacts concerned with the testing situation, must be closely associated with the notion of educability or scholastic aptitude. By adding this latter caveat, I mean to underline the notion that the IQ test is an index of a culturally-bound phenomenon, the ability to meet the explicit educational standards of modern industrialized society.

Notice also that nothing has been said so far concerning the question of the hereditary basis of intelligence. In the early days of intelligence testing the innate nature of intelligence was either taken as axiomatic, or inferred from the stable scores obtained when individuals were tested over time.

3.1.2 The stability of IQ

If an hereditary view of intelligence is assumed, then any fluctuation in IQ score over time must, on *a priori* grounds, be attributed to random error, or the effects of factors unrelated to intelligence *per se*, such as motivation and some of the other factors previously mentioned. In fact if a test, or two forms of a test are administered over a short period of time to the same group of testees the test-retest reliability can be calculated by correlating the two sets of scores. On this simple test of stability, IQ tests measure up extremely well. However, in order to assess the stability of IQ over longer periods other considerations arise.

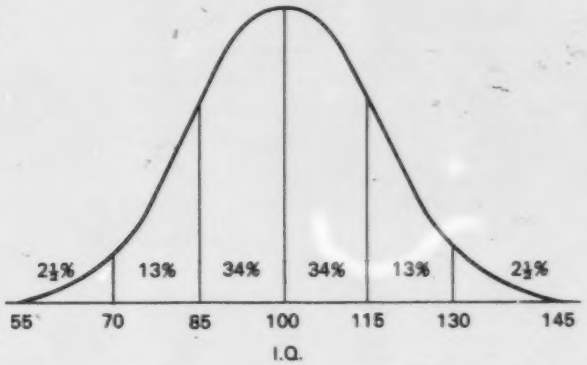

FIGURE 3 IQ tests are constructed to give this distribution of scores. The percentages refer to the percentage of a population which is expected to fall within the band delimited by the adjacent parallel lines.

In order to compare IQ scores for different age groups it is necessary to visualize what exactly an IQ score is. It is the relative standing of an individual with respect to others who have taken the same intelligence test. Conventionally the difficulty of questions in a test is adjusted so that most people bunch around a certain range of scores, and fewer people attain scores either above or below that range. Typically the scoring is adjusted so that the population tested give a 'normal distribution' when frequency of individuals is plotted against test score. Conventionally scores are also arranged so that the average score is IQ = 100. It is a property of a normal distribution (see Figure 3) that by knowing a person's score, it is possible to work out how many people will have a score either above or below that point. For instance, because of this scoring convention it is possible to say that anyone with an IQ of 115 will have one-sixth of the population above him or her. With a score of IQ = 130, there will be two and one-half percent of the population above this point. And so on. Using this kind of scoring procedure intelligence tests of quite different levels of difficulty can be given to children of different ages. This is necessary simply because a test constructed for six year olds would allow practically every twenty year old to pass it, so that the application of the test to the latter age group would be non-discriminating. By using the scoring convention above one can assess stability of

individuals over time simply by looking at their standing relative to the peer group. Stability is achieved when a score places an individual at a particular point in the distribution of scores on both occasions of testing, and even if the tests are not at the same level of difficulty.

Using just such a criterion of stability it has been found that the score on test for under-three year olds predicts nothing about the relative standing of the individuals tested in adulthood. This is probably due to the fact that the skills tested at the early age bear no resemblance to the skills tested later! However, by the age of five, a child's IQ score will correlate about 0.5 with the adult score, and by the age of eleven this correlation has risen to about 0.8, where it remains stable.

Question 18 Is the variation in intelligence equally marked in different age groups?

Question 19 What do you think the stability of IQ tells us with respect to the influence of inheritance or environment?

The advent of the IQ test, and its widespread use in society, has not substantially altered the nature of the debate concerning the origins of intelligence. As I have argued above, there is no reason to believe that the isolation of a 'g' factor, nor the demonstration of the stability of IQ scores at different ages, can be taken as evidence either for or against the inherited nature of intelligence.

3.2 IQ AND MERITOCRACY

What the IQ test did, was to demonstrate that intelligence, if that indeed is what an IQ test measures, was not only distributed differently between social classes, as had previously been assumed, but that there was some overlap of individuals between different social classes with respect to their IQ scores. The application of IQ tests to large populations (often an appreciable proportion of the predominantly male population conscripted during the First and Second World Wars) had yielded rich data on which to base that conclusion.

In one comprehensive American study (Stewart, 1947) the IQ score and pre-induction occupation was ascertained for 67,254 men enlisted in the United States army in 1944. Figure 4 shows the results obtained.

It suggests a strong association between occupation and IQ. The durability of this association can be demonstrated by other data which shows the IQ of children belonging to different occupational categories as defined by the father's occupation (see Table 1). Two important points emerge. Firstly, the relationship is stable across nationalities. Secondly, the class/IQ association spans the generation gap.

TABLE 1. IQs of children in three countries

	IQs of children		
Father's occupation	United States	Great Britain	Soviet Union
Professional	116	115	117
Semi-professional and Managerial	112	113	109
Clerical, skilled trades and retail businessmen	107	106	105
Rural landowners and farmers	95	97	101
Semi-skilled minor clerical workers and minor businessmen	105	102	97
Slightly skilled	98	97	—
Urban and day labourers	95	96	92

70 FIGURE 4 Median intelligence test scores for common occupations, sorted into ten categories. The superimposed line shows the number of individuals per category with the scale at the left reading in thousands of cases. (The usual normal distribution of scores is not obtained because of the unusual sample of testees – see text.)

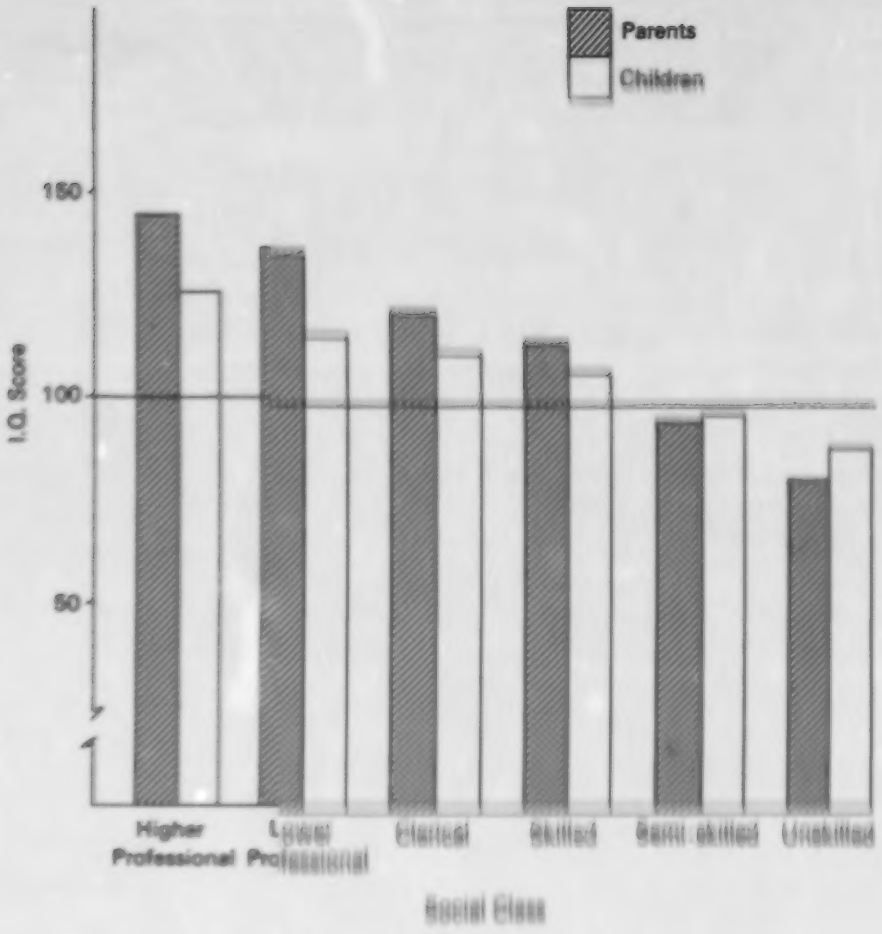

FIGURE 5 The graph shows distribution of IQ by social class for parents and children. The data are from Burt (1961), and are explained in the text.

A much later British study by Burt examined the same kind of association for both parents and their children (see Figure 5). The differences in IQ turn out to be even more dramatic than in the equivalent studies described above.

> The differences in average IQ between the highest and lowest class are very large: 55 points for the parents and 28 for the children. (It is quite usual in such studies to find that the average or 'mean' IQ of the children in each class lies halfway between the parental mean and the overall population mean of 100. This phenomenon, known as 'regression to the mean', can be predicted from genetic theory. We return to it later.)* The significance of these large IQ differences between the classes can best be seen if we express them slightly differently. The average difference of 55 points between the parents of the highest and lowest classes implies (because of the statistical properties of IQ scores) that less than one person in 100 from the lowest class has an IQ as high as that possessed by 50 people in 100 in the highest class. Similarly, the average difference of 28 points between the children in these two classes implies that only 2½ per cent of the children of unskilled parents have IQs which reach the average IQ of the children of higher professional parents.
>
> (Burt, 1961)

**Because Burt was a strong believer in the genetic theory of intelligence he argues that regression to the mean can be predicted from genetic theory. It can, but it can also be explained in other ways. This argument need not detain us here.*

The fact remains that despite strong differences in IQ scores between the social classes, there is some overlap. It is this overlap which was to be the contribution of psychometrics to the educational debate. Once it is granted that there is overlap in intelligence (or IQ scores?) between classes, it becomes apparent that to hold a consistent line of argument those who are interested in preserving a class system must begin to talk in terms of a meritocracy. In other words if it is assumed, *a priori*, that the class system is to be maintained, it is best served by encouraging some social mobility which will allow the more intelligent to move up, and the duller members of the upper classes to move down. Of course this shifts the older evolutionary argument onto another footing. Inherited wealth and property must be justified in new ways, because regression to the mean, as described by Burt, does not guarantee that intelligence will remain in families who are wealthy. High IQ parents will generate children of lower IQ than themselves, on average, just as low IQ parents will generate children of higher IQ than themselves. The concept of meritocracy had arrived.

The *social* origins of the concept of meritocracy in Britain are to be found in the discussion of educational philosophy around the turn of the century. The following extracts from Parliamentary Reports (see Maclure, 1973), make the case clearly enough:

Extract from: The Samuelson Report, Volume 1, Second Report 1884

> Great as has been the progress of foreign countries, and keen as is their rivalry with us in many important branches, we have no hesitation in stating our conviction, which we believe to be shared by Continental manufacturers themselves, that, taking the state of the arts of construction and the staple manufactures as a whole, our people still maintain their position at the head of the industrial world. . . .
>
> In two very important respects, however, the education of a certain proportion of persons employed in industry abroad is superior to that of English workmen; first, as regards the systematic instruction in drawing given to adult artisans, more especially in France, Belgium and Italy; and secondly, as to the general diffusion of elementary education in Switzerland and Germany. . . .
>
> . . . Not many years have passed since the time when it would still have been a matter for argument whether, in order to maintain the high position which this country has attained in the industrial arts, it is incumbent upon us to take care that our managers, our foremen, and our workmen, should, in the degrees compatible with their circumstances, combine theoretical instruction with their acknowledged practical skill.
>
> No argument of this kind is needed at the present day. In nearly all the great industrial centres – in the Metropolis, in Glasgow, in Manchester, Liverpool, Oldham, Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield, Keighley, Sheffield, Nottingham, Birmingham, the Potteries, and elsewhere – more or less flourishing schools of science and art of various grades, together with numerous art and science classes exist, and their influence may be traced in the productions of the localities in which they are placed.
>
> (Maclure, 1973, p 122)

From a report on Secondary Education 1895

> Upon the magnitude of those questions, and their influence on the future of the country we need not enlarge. Elementary education is among the first needs of a people, and especially of a free people, as appears by the fact that all, or nearly all, modern constitutional States have undertaken to provide it. But it is by those who have received a further and superior kind of instruction that the intellectual progress of a nation is maintained. It is they who provide its literature, who advance its science, who direct its government. In England those classes which have been going to resort to the universities have, during the last sixty or seventy years, fared well. Those who could afford to pay the very high charges made at some of the great

73

endowed schools have had an education which, if somewhat one-sided, has been highly stimulative to certain types of mind. But the great body of the commercial and professional classes were long forced to content themselves with a teaching which was usually limited in range and often poor in quality, and whose defects had become so familiar that they had ceased to be felt as defects.

(Maclure, 1973, p 148)

These reports argue for the social necessity of increased educational provision, to which, by the closing years of the First World War, is added another theme:

> A feature in the movement of opinion is the increased feeling of social solidarity which has been created by the War. When you get Conscription, when you get a state of affairs under which the poor are asked to pour out their blood and to be mulcted in the high cost of living for large international policies, then every just mind begins to realize that the boundaries of citizenship are not determined by wealth, and that the same logic which leads us to desire an extension of the franchise points also to an extension of education. There is a growing sense, not only in England but through Europe, and I may say especially in France, that the industrial workers of the country are entitled to be considered primarily as citizens and as fit subjects for any form of education from which they are capable of profiteering (*sic*).
>
> H. A. L. Fisher, President of the Board of Education, Hansard, Aug 10, 1917. (Maclure, 1973, p 173)

These then are some of the trends towards increased provision which, coupled with changes in educational philosophy towards the production of the 'cultivated citizen', formed the background to later reports which specifically attempted to marry such educational aims with the limited financial provision which Britain was able in or cared to make for the realisation of such aims.

Two formative reports by the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education, one in 1926, the other in 1938, show how the thinking of psychologists had infiltrated government policy making on this issue.

Extract from the Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education on the Education of the Adolescent, 1926:

there are . . .

> three great ends of human life and activity which we trust that our scheme will help to promote. One is the forming and strengthening of character – individual and national character – through the placing of youth, in the hour of its growth, 'as it were in the fair meadow' of a congenial and inspiring environment. Another is the training of boys and girls to delight in pursuits and rejoice in accomplishments – work in music and art; work in wood and metals; work in literature and the record of human history – which may become the recreations and the ornaments of hours of leisure in maturer years. And still another is the awakening and guiding of the practical intelligence, for the better and more skilled service of the community in all its multiple business and complex affairs – an end which cannot be dismissed as 'utilitarian' in any country, and least of all in a country like ours, so highly indu...ialized, and so dependent on the success of its industries, that it needs for its success, and even for its safety, the best and most highly trained skill of its citizens. . . .
>
> . . . The general agreement of administrators and teachers that primary education should be regarded as ending, and post-primary education as beginning, at the age of 11 + seems to us important, as supplying, at any rate, a starting point from which the further problems included in our reference may be attacked. The principal reasons for this consensus of opinion are, we think, two. In the first place there is the argument of the

psychologist. Educational organization is likely to be effective in proportion as it is based on the actual facts of the development of children and young persons. By the time that the age of 11 or 12 has been reached children have given some indication of differences in interests and abilities sufficient to make it possible and desirable to cater for them by means of schools of varying types, but which have, nevertheless, a broad common foundation. . . .

(Maclure, 1973, pp 182–3)

Extract from the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education on Secondary Education with Special Reference to Grammar Schools and Technical High Schools, 1938:

> Intellectual development during childhood appears to progress as if it were governed by a single central factor, usually known as 'general intelligence', which may be broadly described as innate all-round intellectual ability. It appears to enter into everything which the child attempts to think, or say, or do, and seems on the whole to be the most important factor in determining his work in the classroom. Our psychological witnesses assured us that it can be measured approximately by means of intelligence tests. . . .
>
> We were informed that, with few exceptions, it is possible at a very early age to predict with some degree of accuracy the ultimate level of a child's intellectual powers, but this is true only of general intelligence and does not hold good in respect of specific aptitudes or interests. The average child is said to attain the effective limit of development in general intelligence between the ages of 16 and 18. . . .
>
> Since the ratio of each child's mental age to his chronological age remains approximately the same, while his chronological age increases, the mental differences between one child and another will grow larger and larger and will reach a maximum during adolescence. It is accordingly evident that different children from the age of 11, if justice is to be done to their varying capacities, require types of education varying in certain important respects. . . .
>
> . . . We believe that the selective examination at the age of 11 + . . . is capable of securing for those pupils who quite certainly have as much intelligence, and intelligence of such a character, that without doubt they ought to receive a secondary education of grammar school type; and (b) those pupils who quite certainly would not benefit from such an education. . . .
>
> . . . The amount of provision of education of the grammar school type which is desirable cannot be precisely laid down for the country as a whole. It depends in each area in a high degree on the character and traditions of the population, industrial conditions, and the future careers of the children. . . . On the assumption that alternative forms of secondary education will be provided. . . . We think that provision based on an average annual admission to the Grammar Schools of 15 per cent. of the 'secondary school age-group' in the public elementary schools might for the present be accepted as a working figure.

(Maclure, 1973, p 195)

One of the primary authoritative sources for the justification of the 11+ examination was Sir Cyril Burt. As principal psychologist to the London Education Authority he had established a high reputation with his earlier work which showed conclusively that one widespread cause of educational retardation was malnutrition. He was also a leading exponent of intelligence testing, and as I have stated previously, a firm believer in the large hereditary influence on IQ scores. Burt had been responsible for writing over sixty pages of the 140 page Consultative Committee Report on Psychological Tests of Educable Capacity (1924), and had written or contributed to six of the nine appendices to that document. In that report and elsewhere the primary influence of heredity on intelligence was taken as axiomatic.

1 The standard reasoning behind use of chronological age is based on a different way of calculating IQ than the ratio of mental to chronological age. The argument is also flawed.

For present purposes it is important to note two assumptions on which selection at 11+ was based.

First, it was assumed that intelligence can usefully be considered as consisting of two broad 'types'. One is average intelligence which finds its best expression in the development of practical arts, crafts, and skills. The other is outstanding intelligence which manifests itself in terms of leadership potential, high artistic achievement, or outstanding scientific prowess. This assumption forms the justification of a two or three tier process of secondary education, and serves to distinguish it from other possible arrangements, such as more modern forms of comprehensive education.

It is clear that the distinction between grammar schools and other secondary schools was based on the need for different education for different social classes. Better primary education was to nurture all children to an age at which reliable selection could be made of those with 'grammar school potential'. At that point the grammar school child could be given an education fitting for future members of the 'commercial and professional classes', whilst ordinary secondary school children could be equipped to become better 'managers, foremen, and workmen'.

To be sure, the suggestion that there were two kinds of intelligence was a convenience adopted by policy makers, but it was a notion based on the authoritative advice of intelligence testers who believed that IQ did serve to distinguish the more 'practical' from the more 'abstract' person, even if IQ was (by definition) a continuous variable, and not one with a convenient two-way classification – the haves, and the have-nots. The intelligence testers obviously had some confidence that IQ was a quantitative variable which related sufficiently closely to the demands of the grammar school and ordinary secondary school education, to allow it to be used as an aid to selection of the top fifteen per cent for grammar school places.

What is not so clear, however, is the rationale for connecting IQ with the likely success of a pupil in attaining high professional office. It is true that IQ scores correlate reasonably well with academic success – i.e. in achieving good qualifications in the school leaving examinations – and I have discussed some reasons why this might be the case. It is not at all clear that there should be any *necessary* connection between IQ and socio-economic status in adulthood. Nothing I have said about the validation of IQ tests would lead to that conclusion.

Recent work in the United States of America, by Jencks (1973), has addressed itself precisely to the relationship between IQ, academic success, occupational status, income, and the like (see Figure 6). Jencks found that there was indeed a substantial correlation between IQ at age 11, and academic qualifications. Further, there was also a substantial correlation between academic qualifications and occupational status. However, two further findings help us interpret these correlations in a surprising way. First, there was no significant correlation between academic success and type of schooling. In other words, IQ at age 11 was more important in 'influencing' academic success than was any effect of school environment, or syllabus. Second, it was found that IQ in adulthood did not correlate to any marked degree with occupational status, nor with income.

Question 20 What are the implications of these findings for the provision of schooling environments?

Question 21 If IQ at age 11 correlates both with adult IQ and with success in school leaving examinations, and if the latter correlates with occupational status, why is there no marked correlation between adult IQ and occupational status? (see Figure 6).

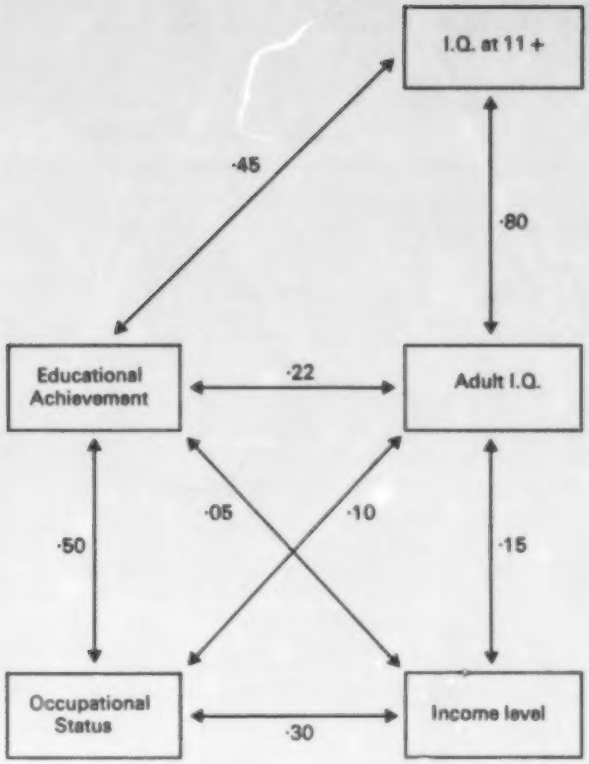

FIGURE 6

In summarizing his findings on income distribution Jencks states that:

> 1. Poverty is not primarily hereditary. While children born into poverty have a higher-than-average chance of ending up poor, there is still an enormous amount of economic mobility from one generation to the next. Indeed, there is nearly as much economic inequality among brothers raised in the same homes as in the general population. This means that inequality is re-created anew in each generation, even among people who start life in essentially identical circumstances.
>
> 2. The primary reason some people end up richer than others is not that they have more adequate cognitive skills. While children who read well, get the right answers to arithmetic problems, and articulate their thoughts clearly are somewhat more likely than others to get ahead, there are many other equally important factors involved. Thus there is almost as much economic inequality among those who score high on standardized tests as in the general population. Equalizing everyone's reading scores would not appreciably reduce the number of economic 'failures.'
>
> 3. There is no evidence that school reform can substantially reduce the extent of cognitive inequality, as measured by tests of verbal fluency, reading comprehension, or mathematical skill. Neither school resources nor segregation has an appreciable effect on either test scores or educational attainment.
>
> (Jencks, 1973 pp 7–8)

It is important to remember that Jencks' study was based on recent American data. The range of schooling environments, and the entry requirements for different occupations, may well differ in important ways from the British situation both now and in the 1930s and 1940s. However, despite this stricture it is still true that without this kind of study it is impossible to demonstrate the desirability or otherwise of particular educational structures, and selection at 11+ in particular.

The notion of a fixed intelligence is the second assumption implied in the Board of Education reports which were to legitimate the adoption of the 11+ test. You will

recall that the notion of 'stability' of IQ was based on the comparison of the relative standing of individuals in the IQ distribution at different ages (cf. section 3.1.2). Stability is therefore a concept which refers not to individuals as such, but the whole distribution of individuals at different ages. A relatively high stability on that criterion does *not* preclude the possibility of quite large differences in an IQ score for any given *individual*.

Given a largely 'conforming' society, it is only a relatively small handful of people who will experience significant deviations in environmental influence related to educational experience. It is only possible to assess the *potential* instability of IQ, by looking specifically at such small groups, or even particular individuals; in the general mass of data their potential effect in altering the stability of IQ can at best be small.

When examined in this way the stability of IQ becomes more questionable, as Vernon (1969) has pointed out:

> Within western cultures there was the early study by Gordon in 1923 of canal boat and gipsy children, whose Binet IQ deteriorated after six when they failed to attend school, but whose scores on performance tests were less affected. Then there was the finding in 1917–18 that American Army recruits averaged no better than 13 year-olds on intelligence tests. For many years most psychologists were content to explain this in terms of mental growth tailing off and reaching a constant level by about 14. Other researches however demonstrated increases even into the 20s among students still at school or college. This apparent contradiction becomes quite intelligible if it is admitted that growth, at least at the kinds of reasoning measured by intelligence tests, ceases when people leave school and enter jobs, or engage in leisure pursuits, which provide little further intellectual stimulation. This hypothesis was confirmed by the writer's analysis of Matrices scores of some 90,000 recruits by age and civilian occupation. It showed a general tendency for scores to decline with age from 17 or 18 years; but among men in more highly skilled jobs, requiring most 'use of their brains', the scores stayed up longer and decline more slowly than among unskilled workers and labourers.
>
> (Vernon, 1969, pp 77–8)

The kinds of data quoted above in questioning the basic stability of IQ throw serious doubt on the validity of the use of intelligence tests for educational selection procedures or the provision of particular types of school. Only with the unproven assumptions of a 'fixed' intelligence, an accurate measure of that intelligence (IQ), and the importance of intelligence for promoting the well-being of society can the involvement of intelligence testers in the formulation of educational selection procedures be justified.

The involvement of intelligence testers in the formulation of educational policy in Britain thus bears an important resemblance to their involvement in the formulation of immigration policy in America. The scientist is again caught in the role of extrapolating beyond the confines of research data. No research on IQ testing, and the measurement of intelligence, can now or could then justify the use of selection at 11+ as any more than an *ad hoc* expediency for allocating individuals on a temporary basis within the confined choices of schooling available. Perhaps the British psychologists had become drunk on the joint success gained in establishing independent Chairs of Psychology, and at the same time perfecting a scientific measuring instrument of their very own.

3.3 HERITABILITY, RACE AND CLASS

With the upsurge of environmentalism both in science, and in the world at large, the two-tier system of secondary education in Britain has begun to crumble. In America educational provision has never been based on the same kind of selection

procedure although in certain states schools and universities which are privately financed have offered what is, in effect, a two-tier system of secondary education.

But a link can be made between race, class, education and IQ, both in this country and in America, when considering recent reaction to the effects of compensatory education. In America the debate has centred on the plight of the 'underprivileged' children of predominantly indigenous blacks in the poorer urban ghettos. In Britain the central concern has been the education of the children from immigrant communities.

The Americans have, in response perhaps to the awakening of black consciousness, been at pains to ensure that in a competitive society everyone enters the competition with equal advantages and disadvantages. It has been felt that by the provision of an extra-rich school environment, the IQ of underprivileged children might be raised to a level which would then allow them to compete with children of the middle classes. As you have seen from the study by Jencks, this idea may have been misguided in so far as type of schooling does not seem to be an important factor in scholastic achievement in adolescence. Nor does it seem to be true that IQ at 11 or thereafter has any appreciable correlation with occupational status. The idea of raising children's IQ in order to ensure that they had an equal chance in gaining as much socio-economic success as their middle class neighbours may have therefore been fundamentally misconceived. This is the basic flaw in Herrnstein's syllogism (see page 53).

Whatever the wisdom of compensatory education, viewed from this point in time, it was implemented on a large scale and involved the expenditure of considerable amounts of federal funds. It has become apparent that whether or not such underprivileged children benefited in any general sense, their IQ did not change to any great extent, and did not maintain itself at a higher level.

In a now-famous article in the Harvard Educational Review in 1969, Jensen assessed the failure of the 'headstart' programmes, and other programmes of positive intervention designed to boost the academic achievements and the IQ of economically deprived children. He prefaced that review with the following remarks:

> The failure of Compensatory Education.
>
> Compensatory education has been tried and it apparently has failed.
>
> Compensatory education has been practised on a massive scale for several years in many cities across the nation. It began with auspicious enthusiasm and high hopes of educators. It had unprecedented support from Federal funds. It had theoretical sanction from social scientists espousing the major underpinning of its rationale: the "deprivation hypothesis," according to which academic lag is mainly the result of social, economic, and educational deprivation and discrimination – an hypothesis that has met with wide, uncritical acceptance in the atmosphere of society's growing concern about the plight of minority groups and the economically disadvantaged.
>
> The chief goal of compensatory education – to remedy the educational lag of disadvantaged children and thereby narrow the achievement gap between "minority" and "majority" pupils – has been utterly unrealized in any of the large compensatory education programs that have been evaluated so far. On the basis of a nationwide survey and evaluation of compensatory education programs the United States Commission on Civil Rights (1967) came to the following conclusions:
>
> The Commission's analysis does not suggest that compensatory education is incapable of remedying the effects of poverty on the academic achievement of individual children. There is little question that school programs involving expenditures for cultural enrichment, better teaching, and other needed educational services can be helpful to disadvantaged children. The fact remains, however, that none of the programs appear to have raised significantly the achievement of participating pupils, as a group, within the period evaluated by the Commission (p. 138).

The Commission's review gave special attention to compensatory education in majority-Negro schools whose programs "were among the most prominent and included some that have served as models for others." The Commission states: "A principal objective of each was to raise the academic achievement of disadvantaged children. Judged by this standard the programs did not show evidence of much success" (p. 138).[1]

Why has there been such uniform failure of compensatory programs wherever they have been tried? What has gone wrong? In other fields, when bridges do not stand, when aircraft do not fly, when machines do not work, when treatments do not cure, despite all conscientious efforts on the part of many persons to make them do so, one begins to question the basic assumptions, principles, theories, and hypotheses that guide one's efforts. Is it time to follow suit in education?

[1] *Some of the largest and most highly publicized programs of compensatory education that have been held up as models but which produced absolutely no significant improvement in the scholastic achievement of disadvantaged students are: the* Banneker Project *in St. Louis (8 years),* Higher Horizons *in New York (5 years),* More Effective Schools *in New York (3 years), and large-scale programs in Syracuse, Seattle, Philadelphia, Berkeley, and a score of other cities (for detailed reports see U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1967, pp. 115–140).*

Reports on Project Head Start indicate that initial gains of 5 to 10 points in IQ on conventional intelligence tests are a common finding, but this gain usually does not hold up through the first year of regular schooling. More positive claims for the efficacy of Head Start involve evidence of the detection and correction of medical disabilities in disadvantaged preschool children and the reportedly favorable effects of the program on children's self-confidence, motivation, and attitudes toward school.

(Jensen, 1969, pp 2–3)

What was controversial in Jensen's review was his argument that the programmes had failed because IQ differences between Caucasians and Negroes were largely influenced by genetic determinants.

Question 22 What other explanations for the failure of such programmes might be advanced both in general and in terms of what you have previously learned from this unit?

Jensen was well aware that the failure of compensatory education could not, of itself, prove that there was a strong hereditary influence in the production of racial differences in IQ. Instead he made use of a line of reasoning based on established statistical procedures for analysing the relationship between scores from individuals related to each other by birth. He popularized the idea that the inheritance of IQ could be demonstrated by a rigorous statistical analysis of test results themselves. This analysis involved the notion of heritability.

The notion of heritability is derived from studies in agricultural and stock-breeding research. In such studies it is often desirable to attempt to apportion the variation in a stock on some particular characteristic (milk-yield, root growth etc) in terms of the variation due to genetic influence, and that due to environment (rearing conditions, use of fertilizer etc). This is accomplished by deliberate experimental intervention in order to manipulate both environmental conditions and also genetic characteristics of the stock by control of the fertilization process.

In human studies such experimental intervention is not practised, for obvious reasons. However, there is one possible way of calculating heritability by using a natural occurrence which allows at least some degree of separation of environmental factors and genetic factors. This is the occurrence of twins.

Twins can either occur because of a split of one fertilized egg – monozygote twins,

or because of the development of two separate eggs, separately fertilized – dizygote twins. In the former case, the genetic constitution of the embryos is identical, in the latter case it is not. It would seem simple enough to observe monozygote twins and their variation in IQ, and use this to estimate variation attributable to environmental factors. One might also look for additional variability in the IQ of dizygote twins and attribute that addition to the added effect of genetic variations on top of environmental influence. But life is not that simple.

In the first place, the genetic difference between dizygote twins does not represent the *full* range of variability which exists in the total population. Members of the same family – siblings, share many more genes than would two random people of the same age. The difference in variability between monozygote and dizygote twins can thus only partially measure the full play of potential genetic influences.

Conversely, the environmental differences between twins can only be but a fraction of the potential environmental differences between ordinary siblings, who tend to be treated more distinctly, if only because they are born at different times. Moreover the intrafamily environmental differences are bound to be smaller than interfamily differences. Add to these difficulties the fact that monozygote twins are often treated differently from dizygote twins, and the potential difficulty of deriving heritability estimates becomes obvious.

Various measures have been adopted in an attempt to circumvent such difficulties. Studies can be made of twins separated at birth into different homes, but such children are often placed in similar homes by adoption agencies. Moreover, this variation in procedure does not allow for intra-uterine effects in modifying the genes.

In other cases attempts have been made to compare all possible combinations of relatives within the extended family. But amongst many other difficulties is the fact that any one family is probably exposed to a more similar environment than is encountered in society as a whole because of the powerful effects of socio-economic class in determining the physical and cultural environment. Also, the use of non-twin comparisons necessitates the assumption of particular (and unknown) genetic models which can influence the estimate of heritability to a marked degree.

Thus difficulties abound in the estimation of heritability, but enough has been said to indicate that such an estimate is bounded by its own terms of reference. It only has meaning within the particular context in which the data were collected. There can be no general measure of heritability which can be applied indiscriminately to a given society, group, and certainly not to any individual (cf. Bodmer, W. F., in Richardson and Spear, 1972, for an extended discussion).

Notwithstanding this statement, many psychologists have been prepared to give such an estimate of heritability, and to state that genetic factors account for between 60–80 per cent of variation in IQ. Jensen, as well as Eysenck and Herrnstein are but a few of those prepared to do so.

The form of argument adopted by Eysenck, Jensen, and others has been summarized by Rose, Hambley and Haywood (1973), who offer a critique of that position. The extract which you should now read refers to various aspects of intelligence as a concept, and in its historical usage, which have been introduced as part of your reading from this unit. You should use the article to some extent as a revision exercise. The extract also serves to place the more recent debate on the IQ controversy in an ideological perspective.

READ EXTRACT FROM 'SCIENCE, RACISM AND IDEOLOGY', BY ROSE, HAMBLEY AND HAYWOOD, WHICH IS IN THE COURSE READER

Question 23 What three major criticisms do Rose *et al* make of the use of heritability estimates as applied to IQ data?

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Question 24 What evidence do neurobiologists have which Rose *et al* consider to be important in understanding the development of behaviour or intelligence?

Question 25 Rose *et al* consider that the popularization of the issues of race and IQ perform two ideological functions. What are they?

If it is granted that the present debate on IQ can usefully be considered as an extension of an older ideological debate which shifts its ground in response to changing social and economic circumstances, then I have made my point. Scientific facts cannot be used as a source of external validation for other patterns of inequality which exist in society without taking cognizance of the idea that those very facts must themselves be interpreted within the context of an ideological stance.

Scientists are often prepared to enter debates on social policy and this is only proper. What is inappropriate is that the evidence which science offers should be taken as sacrosanct and 'beyond politics'. Similarly those responsible for translating political philosophy into social policy and practice must use all the scientific information available to them in taking decisions. What is inappropriate is that such information should be used as an *ad hoc* justification for policy, which is based on other grounds, or as a means for bolstering the plausibility of policy decisions.

Whatever the 'heritability' of IQ, it cannot be held to explain the present pattern of social inequalities in human society.

4 CONCLUSIONS

I have tried to demonstrate that the naive notion of intelligence as used by Darwin and the notion of IQ as used by more recent workers, share a common link. Both conceptions have been extrapolated far beyond the frameworks in which they were conceived, and applied indiscriminately to the making of social policy. That this has happened is as much due to the folly of individual scientists as it is due to the skilful use of science by policy makers.

I have demonstrated this process in two particular instances, one to do with racial differences, one to do with class differences. In both cases the concept of natural endowment has been used to justify the stratification of society. The reason for this is that both of these social issues are interconnected in a way that can best be explained in terms of a political ideology of capitalism as practised in advanced industrial nations. The use of 'natural endowment' can be seen as an attempt to offer plausible justification for class structure on the one hand and domination of the Third World on the other.

I do not wish to claim that Darwin's views are wrong any more than I wish to support Watson's views as correct. Nor do I wish to state categorically that IQ is, or is not, largely inherited. I simply wish to establish the point that there is no evidence which is so conclusive that it would stand in a court of law, let alone be capable of informing and directing those responsible for government. Not only is the inheritance of IQ an unsolved problem, it is not at all clear that it is not based on a fallacy – the fallacy that IQ measures anything other than some narrowly-defined and socially-bound concept of educability.

The kind of intelligence of which Darwin talked was supposed to be flexible enough to have seen off other primate competition through a vast range of time and changing circumstance. With this in mind it is as well to question whether it is the kind of abstract ability which IQ tests measure which will guarantee our survival into the far distant future, let alone the next generation. The present preoccupation of psychologists with tests of creativity, encouraged by some of the most advanced industrial

employers, suggests that older notions of intelligence are to be changed yet again. But it may well be that it is to our *social* skills which we should turn in seeking to explain the signs of stress which pervade present-day society – but that is another story.

Why is it that concepts of natural endowment so preoccupy not only psychologists but the wider public as well? I have argued that such concepts serve as useful justifications, but I do not wish to imply that they are simply foisted on a gullible public by an exploiting minority. I return to a point I made in my introduction to this unit. Concepts of natural endowment are perhaps the easiest tools to use in explaining the structure of society. The principle of parsimony – in which simplicity is held as a virtue in scientific explanation – has its counterpart in everyday thinking. The mechanisms and structures of modern society are, if nothing else, complex, and social science has yet to come up with adequate explanations of it. It is a comfortable evasion to be able to explain away such complexity by referring to something which is held to reside within ourselves – an unchanging aspect of human nature over which we have no control. If that were true there would be little to be done than adopt a fatalistic attitude to life, and a policy of containing the worst evils that spring up from within us. A psychological need for simplistic explanation thus serves to drive us, in unguarded moments, to a conservative ideological stance.

In the present unit I have attempted to deal with the concept of intelligence, but I might equally have picked some other concept related to 'natural endowment'. Thus there is an increasing tendency to explain certain structural characteristics of society in terms of aggression. In this respect innate aggression is seen as the motive force for the competitive nature of society, and can be used as a justification for *laissez-faire* capitalism in exactly the same way in which intelligence was used in the development of the theory of Social Darwinism. This history of the use of the concept of aggression would have started with Freud rather than Darwin but I think that the same points would have emerged. I hope that you will see this unit as being applicable to any form of natural endowment; as such you should bear in mind the key questions posed in the introduction of this unit as you go forward to the later blocks of the course.

ANSWERS TO SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Answer 1 It is assumed that, in any generation, individuals (plants, animals or *Homo sapiens*) vary from each other on many different measurable attributes. Some of these attributes are particularly important in fitting an organism for survival in a particular environment. Those individuals who possess that degree of an attribute which is most conducive to successful interaction with the environment are most likely to breed successfully. Those *not* possessing that degree of an attribute conducive to survival will either die before reaching sexual maturity, or not breed successfully, or give inadequate protection to the next generation so that it, in turn, has less than an average chance of survival. Thus those most fitted to survive contribute disproportionately more to the next generation. It is assumed that many of the important attributes on which individuals vary are inherited and therefore passed on to the next generation in some way (we now know about chromosomes and genes; Darwin didn't). Therefore, the most fitted to survive breed more successfully than others and in doing so increase the proportion or pool of individuals in the next generation who, through inheritance, are fitted to survive in that same environment.

Given a constant environment over a sufficient period of time, natural selection, or survival of the fittest, provides an explanation for both differentiation of species when separated into distinct environments and for the improvement in adaptation to an environment over time.

Answer 2 Darwin distinguishes two ways in which natural selection can operate. Basically, selection operates on individuals, but when different breeding colonies develop, then the average position of individuals in one colony on a set of attributes will be different from the average position of individuals in another colony. Thus, if as Darwin argues, one tribe has developed a greater degree of group cohesiveness, or greater physical strength etc, then it will survive at the expense of the other when both inhabit the same environment. Darwin places the accent on 'success in battle' but the same process would hold if both tribes simply co-existed in a non-optimal environment because one tribe would capture the greater share of environmental resources.

Answer 3 Intellectual faculty and moral faculty. Those two clusters, which would nowadays be described as behavioural traits, have been consistently differentiated throughout classical history. Kant's differentiation of cognition, conation and affect have commonly been transmuted into intellect, emotion, and drive or motivation (physical energy). As in Darwin's essay, intellect is commonly contrasted with praxis, which is a conglomerate term meant to cover the emotional and motivational aspects of human performance. At the present time the distinction between intelligence and personality serves the same purpose.

Answer 4 In connection with the intellect '(The) habitual practice of each new art must likewise in some slight degree strengthen the intellect'. Elsewhere Darwin states in connection with the moral sense that 'Habits, moreover, followed during many generations probably tend to be inherited'. More specifically he states that 'a man who was not compelled in any deep, instinctive feeling, to sacrifice his life for the good of others, yet was raised to such a sense of glory, would by his example excite the same wish for glory in other men, and would strengthen by exercise the noble feeling of admiration'.

The concept of practice only manifesting itself after several generations poses difficulties, which Darwin was himself aware of. The Lamarckian hypothesis was later adopted by Lysenko in Russia, and it would not be too wide of the mark to suggest an ideological basis for that stand being taken within the political ideology of that nation. The notion of the inheritance of acquired characteristics has now dropped into disfavour in the light of more recent scientific investigation.

Answer 5 It is important to realize that Darwin emphasized the importance of a reasonably hostile environment coupled with a fair degree of overpopulation as the ingredients for a system of natural selection to operate. It is this conjunction which underlies the notion that civilizations in temperate climates have reached more 'advanced' states of progress.

Answer 6 Darwin was most impressed by the reasoning power, memory, and use of symbols which characterize the success of particular species in the primates and was thus led to the conclusion that intellect, as a summary term, was the kind of attribute which, through natural selection, serves to characterize the advance from primate to primeval man. His adoption of intellect as a key factor in the advance from primeval to civilized man was based in part on its importance in the earlier advance from primates to primeval man, but also due to the influence of Galton whose book *Hereditary Genius* (1869) was held to prove that the inheritance of important abilities related to intelligence was a key factor in the promotion of men of eminence in Victorian society.

Answer 7

> 'But the inheritance of property by itself is very far from an evil; for without the accumulation of capital the arts could not progress; and it is chiefly through their power that the civilized races have extended, and are now everywhere extending, their range, so as to take the place of the lower races.'

In this passage Darwin implies that the practice of intelligence, and the development of cultural finesse or even industrial expertise and invention based on that intellectual activity, can only prosper in a climate removed from the regions of the struggle for survival. Such an argument can be taken to support the notion of a class of 'wise-men', 'technocrats', or even 'academics', who by the allotting of a disproportionate amount of general good can be freed to concentrate their energies on those intellectual pursuits which may fit the society in which they live for better survival and thus provide for the common good in the long term. Darwin thus echoes an ideological argument for élites which has been extant from the time of Plato.

Another sense in which Darwin considers wealth to be beneficial may be seen in the following extract:

'When a poor man becomes moderately rich, his children enter trades or professions in which there is struggle enough, so that the able in body and mind succeed best'. Here argument for an élite group is taken into the individual domain. In Darwin's time personal wealth of the parents was more or less the only guarantee for a child's education.

Answer 8 'If in each grade of society the members were divided into two equal bodies, the one including the intellectually superior and the other the inferior, there can be little doubt that the former would succeed best in all occupations, and rear a greater number of children.' In other words Darwin singularly *fails* to give detailed reasons why intellectual superiority might lead to success, and success to the rearing of a greater number of children.

Answer 9 Galton had noted that 'prodigies of genius' tend to be infertile, or at least not to generate offspring for one reason or another. Why did Darwin not consider this to

be a particularly difficult problem? (See answer 9.1 below).

Another problem is that of the prevention of the elimination of the profligate, the criminal, and the weaker members of society in general. 'We civilised men . . . do our utmost to check the process of elimination; we build asylums for the imbecile, the maimed and the sick; we institute poor laws; and medical men exert their utmost skill to save the life of everyone to the last moment'.

Elsewhere the morally decadent, who for Darwin and men of his time meant those men and women who were profligate and married early, would be more likely to breed successfully.

How does Darwin discount these possible barriers to the natural selection of a civilised community? (See answer 9.2 below.)

Darwin also mentions the problem of primogeniture as being the key factor in possible retrograde breeding in the wealthiest families. What mechanism does he suggest which might prevent this retrogression? (See answer 9.3 below.)

Another distinct source of retrogression is the removal of the most able through armed combat in international warfare. Why is this of less relevance in the present era? (See answer 9.4 below).

9.1 'In the case of corporeal (bodily) structures, it is the selection of the slightly better-endowed and the elimination of the slightly less well-endowed individuals, and not the preservation of strongly-marked and rare anomalies, that leads to the advancement of a species'. A little later Darwin refers to the 'normal curve', the bell-shaped curve showing the frequency of occurrence in a population of different amounts of a physical attribute like height or weight or a mental attribute like intellect.

Thus the vast preponderance of individuals cluster near an average and the frequency of individuals falls off symmetrically as one moves away from the average in either direction. If intellect were 'normally distributed' as Galton, for one, claimed it was, then population changes would take much longer to be effected by the selection of individuals who were far above average because their proportionate contribution to the next generation would be very small.

9.2 In all the cases mentioned it is assumed that 'undesirable' members of the population do not in fact generate a large number of offspring. Sometimes this is because they do not breed successfully, but sometimes it is because the breeding life of such people, or the life expectancy of their offspring, is considerably shorter than that of the more 'desirable' members of a population.

9.3 Wealthy men, in seeking power and riches, tend to select beautiful and intelligent women with whom to breed!

9.4 Most modern warfare is conducted by a conscripted army so that the *bulk* of the armed service population no longer consists of the aristocracy. Soldiers in a peace-time army are recruited from poor working-class areas which, in Darwin's terms, contain the pool of inferior genetic stock.

Answer 10 Kamin's work clearly indicates the involvement of psychometricians in the formulation of government policy, and to that extent they were agents for the propagation of those policies. However, it would be naive to attribute sole responsibility to them. The evidence the intelligence testers provided to Congressional committees was only one small part of the evidence collected. To the extent that the formulation of Government policy on immigration was based on a concern to limit unemployment (see answer 12), it would be nearer the truth to regard the psychometricians and eugenicists as *dupes or agents provocateurs* rather than the initiators of policy.

Answer 11 The inferior intelligence of immigrants was only one concern of the general population, as the following extract shows:

> Extreme arguments for restriction such as Grant's were not uncommon, and a great many long-time Americans sincerely feared the impact of the immigrant on local and national political life. The foreigners, they agreed, seemed to flock to the support of corrupt urban bosses, and some were certainly infected with alien political notions – anarchism, syndicalism, Bolshevism. An article in *The Popular Science Monthly* in 1913 argued that: 'Restriction is necessary if our truly American ideals and institutions are to persist, and if our inherited stock of good American manhood is not to be depreciated'. Added to the fears for political institutions was the seeming menace to public health brought about by the supposedly filthy habits of the new immigrants. Magazine articles describing the dangers of alien infection and the spread of contagious diseases were common throughout the period from 1890 to 1918. 'Why', asked a writer in a 1914 issue of *Survey* magazine, 'should we get this mass of diseases from immigrants arriving by sea?' Public demands that immigration be curtailed or eliminated altogether produced a great deal of sentiment in Congress for restrictive legislation. In 1917, Congress overrode President Wilson's veto and required all adult immigrants entering the United States to be able to read at least thirty words of English or their own native language. Similar bills had been vetoed by Presidents Cleveland and Taft, but Wilson's objection that the literacy test was 'not a test of character, or quality, or of personal fitness' was ignored. (Tifft, 1971)

The genetic argument was thus used, in general circulation, as part of a set of prejudiced beliefs.

Answer 12 It is not hard to conjecture, but perhaps more difficult to prove, that the American government during the 1920s had a vested interest in suppressing the growth of working class movements. By attacking immigrants, and by implication non-Caucasians already in America, two things could be achieved. First, limitation of immigration might stop the influx of radical immigrants. There is some evidence that unionization was often instigated by immigrant workers. Secondly, the general effect of creating racial tension might be expected to divide the working class against itself, and divert attention from the structure of capitalist society to the immigrants and blacks as a source of poverty.

There is certainly evidence of close interest in and financial support for the eugenics movement from government, industry and the large foundations.

A simpler concern may have been the strain on resources which unemployment was causing, and the way in which immigration tended to swell the ranks of the unemployed.

Answer 13 'There are then admittedly these slight but significant differences in structure between each human being and every other human being. Differences in early training are even more marked.'

This argument is not a complete refutation of Darwin's view since the latter would presumably argue that a *slight* difference in, for example, complexity of brain structure would lead to a *slight* head-start in taking advantage of early training, and that over *many* generations, those with the slight structural advantage would become a larger percentage of the population through processes of natural selection. However, for this to happen, the effects of early training would have to be assumed to be *optimal* for most individuals for the structural advantage to be turned to good effect.

Answer 14 It is implicit in Watson's view that intellect is a global term which stands for a whole range and diversity

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of skills held in esteem by present-day society. In this respect he has broken free of one drawback with the older 'faculty' psychology, which tended to regard each faculty as a 'unitary' phenomenon. Differences in intellectual capacity are therefore happenchance variations in the number and kinds of skills which an individual has managed to acquire.

Answer 15 In this section Watson does not elaborate an explanation for human evolution. It is obvious from the context of the extract, however, that civilisation 'advances' in intellectual power by the accrued wisdom, built on ever-increasing training, which is handed from generation to generation. A nice illustration of this phenomenon has recently been observed in the study of a colony of Japanese Macaque monkeys. This colony has been observed to elaborate behaviour patterns (swimming, taking new kinds of food etc) which stem from the insight or happenchance behaviour of a single individual. Provided that the individual is high in the 'status hierarchy' the new and successful behaviour is taken up by the whole colony, and thence transmitted to later generations. In animals which have a high degree of gregariousness and which do not reject their young until a late stage of development this kind of transmission (not inheritance!) of acquired characteristics might be expected to be highly efficient.

Answer 16 An IQ score is more specific than Darwin's view of intelligence because it is often limited to abstract reasoning tasks performed at the symbolic level. Verbal ability also features predominantly. Darwin had used the concept of intelligence more loosely, and certainly meant to include creative practical skills as well as more abstract reasoning skills.

Answer 17 In one sense IQ scores are more objective than subjective assessments of intelligence. They are more reliable over time, less likely to vary according to the tester or observer assessing intelligence, and can be shown to predict academic success more accurately than a teacher's subjective judgement. However, it is a moot point whether an IQ score is a quantitative measure of intelligence as used in everyday language, or whether it has any meaning at all outside of its own frame of reference. These points raise the question of how an IQ test is *validated*.

Answer 18 There is no way of answering that question. For a start, it is only possible to measure IQ, not intelligence. Secondly, IQ scores are deliberately manipulated to give a standard spread of scores within an age group, so that variation is equally marked in different age groups *by definition*.

Answer 19 There is no way in which the stability of IQ can tell us about the relative contribution of heredity and environment:

> The increasing stability of test scores as people get older tells us nothing about the relative importance of heredity and environment. An adult trait can be genetically determined and yet show no relationship to childhood traits. There is virtually no correlation, for example, between the amount of hair a boy has in childhood and the amount he will have at the age of 40. Nonetheless, there is plenty of evidence that baldness at 40 is influenced by genes. Conversely, a trait can be quite stable from childhood to maturity without being at all influenced by genes. The accent with which an individual speaks, for example, is usually the same at 6 and 60. This does not prove that accents are genetically determined. It simply proves that once some kinds of behaviour are acquired, they are hard to change.
>
> When trying to interpret the stability of test scores, we have found it helpful to compare test scores with weight. An infant's weight predicts his adult weight very poorly. A young child's weight predicts his adult weight considerably better. The correlations climb steadily as the individual approaches adulthood. Such correlations do not prove that weight is immune to environmental influence – we all know better. Neither do they prove that an individual's weight never changes. Again, we have visible contrary evidence. So how are we to interpret the correlations? First, it is clear that weight is partly – but only partly – determined by genetic factors. Second, malnutrition in childhood seems to have some permanent effect on weight. Third, most people accept their "natural" weight more or less automatically. Those who are overweight make only sporadic efforts to cut it down by dieting. Thus, while weight at one age need not predict weight later on, it usually does predict it quite well.
>
> (Jencks, 1973, p 62)

Answer 20 IQ at age 11 may determine which type of school a child attends, but results in school leaving examinations are largely due to the child's own efforts, not the effects of the school environment. The data therefore offer no justification for the existence of schools of different 'academic' standard in order to foster different types of 'intelligence'.

A further implication is that it is to the first ten years of life that attention must be directed if environmental influences (however large or small) are to be understood.

Answer 21 The simplest possibility is as follows: Some employers use school leaving qualifications as an important determinant of entry behaviour to a job. One would therefore expect a correlation between scholastic achievement and occupational status even if one studied only a group of people with similar IQ ratings.

On the other hand there are many jobs where scholastic achievement is unimportant. That is why the correlation between scholastic achievement and occupational status is not higher than it is. Where such jobs require quite specific skills, unrelated to any 'g' factor, one would not expect any correlation between IQ (at any age) and occupational status. Since the vast preponderance of jobs in society do not require any measure of scholastic achievement it is not surprising to find a non-significant correlation of IQ and occupational status whilst finding a reasonably high correlation between IQ at 11 and academic success.

Answer 22 1 Intervention by the age of schooling may be too late. Earlier data showed that IQ is often stabilized by the age of 11.

2 The very stability of IQ normally exhibited by the age of 11 may merely indicate that a child has accepted its role as an academic failure by that age and is unprepared to receive an educationally enriched environment.

3 An intervention programme will only be as good as the educational theory on which it is based. There is still disagreement amongst both educators and psychologists on the best method of promoting intellectual curiosity. Further, programmes based on promoting academic achievement rather than creative potential may singularly fail to boost IQ.

4 If intervention programmes are designed to promote, or do coincidentally promote other desirable outcomes – political awareness, good citizenship, or whatever – this will not be picked up by using IQ as a measure. (cf. Richards *et al*, in Richardson and Spear, 1972.) Only those committed to the view that IQ measures some general intellectual predisposition, and that it is this predisposition which is of paramount importance in society, would care to adopt IQ as a major criterion of success of compensatory education.

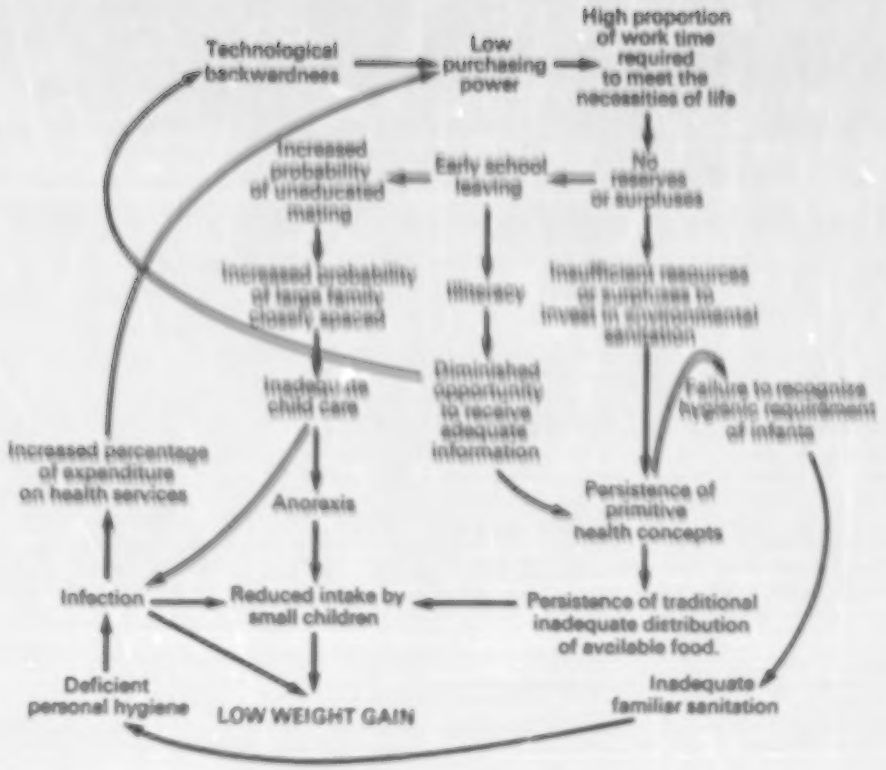
Technological backwardness
Low purchasing power
High proportion of work time required to meet the necessities of life
Increased probability of uneducated mating
Early school leaving
No reserves or surpluses
Increased probability of large family closely spaced
Illiteracy
Insufficient resources or surpluses to invest in environmental sanitation
Inadequate child care
Diminished opportunity to receive adequate information
Failure to recognize hygienic requirement of infants
Increased percentage of expenditure on health services
Anorexia
Persistence of primitive health concepts
Infection
Reduced intake by small children
Persistence of traditional inadequate distribution of available food.
Deficient personal hygiene
LOW WEIGHT GAIN
Inadequate familial sanitation

FIGURE 7 Chart of interrelations among biosocial factors and low weight gain (from Cravioto *et al*).

Answer 23 1 That the estimates of heritability may be inaccurate.

2 That estimates of heritability do not take account of the biochemical environment.

3 That estimates of heritability are only applicable to the population on which the estimates are based.

Answer 24 There is a mass of neurobiological evidence to the effect that malnutrition and other more diverse factors can affect early development and also produce structural changes in the brain. The above chart, from Cravioto *et al*, shows how technological backwardness and its accompanying features are related to low weight gain. The application of the chart to industrial societies is problematical, and the correlation between low weight gain and mental retardation is fairly low. However, the chart illustrates the complexity of the problem of determining environmental and biochemical factors in human development and illustrates the kind of research which Rose *et al* are advocating.

The chart also has implications for the way in which environmental factors are usually controlled in studies of the heritability of IQ. This argument has been stated most forcefully by Biesheuval:

> . . . My major and most fundamental criticism of the way the environmental influences have been handled – and this applies to the majority of the sources on which Jensen relies for his estimates – is that control has been exercised cross-sectionally in time and not longitudinally. When nutritional status, or educational level, or socio-economic status etc., are equated as they are at the start of the investigation, these environmental factors are deemed to have been controlled, although the investigator may know nothing about how they varied during the preceding development period. This surely is decisive as virtually everything we are interested in under the heading of cognitive processes is the outcome of a long period of growth and maturation, from the prenatal stage onward. Adverse circumstances relating to health, nutrition, child rearing practices, mental stimulation, opportunities for interaction with the material and cultural environment, are all known to be relevant and the earlier their impact, the less reversible their effects appear to be.
>
> The evidence suggests that for various functions there are critical maturational periods, during which physical well-being, mental stimulation, environmental interaction, have their optimum effect, and during which future deployment of potentialities can be permanently affected, either positively or negatively. Inability to take full advantage of later favourable opportunities (for example in the school) would be a consequence and cross-sectional environmental control would be particularly misleading in such cases.
>
> (S. Biesheuval, 1972)

Answer 25 1 It provides a 'scientific' rationale for existing patterns of inequality.

2 It serves as a diversive force in the working class by explaining negro or immigrant ghettos in terms of 'natural propensities' rather than focusing attention on the role of economics or the class structure as predisposing forces.

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D302 Unit Titles

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